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THOMAS CARLYLE, ÆT. 49

LETTERS OF THOMAS
CARLYLE *to* JOHN STUART
MILL, JOHN STERLING AND
ROBERT BROWNING · *Edited by*
ALEXANDER CARLYLE, M.A.

WITH PORTRAITS

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Carlyle, Thomas,
1795-1881

Letters of Thomas
Carlyle to John Stuart
[1923]

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PREFACE

THIS volume comprises Carlyle's letters to John Stuart Mill, John Sterling and Robert Browning, three eminent literary men with whom he was for many years on terms of closest friendship.

With Mill, the earliest of these, he first became acquainted in September, 1831, when he had come up from Craigenputtock to London to make arrangements for the publication of *Sartor Resartus*, then called *Teufelsdröckh*—though this name was altered to *Teufelsdröckh* before publication. Two of his old friends, William Empson (son-in-law of Francis Jeffrey) and Charles Buller (formerly his private pupil), who were well acquainted with Mill, and very desirous that he and Carlyle should meet, advised him to call on Mrs. Austin, in the hope that she would bring about the desired meeting. Accordingly Carlyle made a call on this lady, at the end of August, and was cordially welcomed by her, whom he found to be "the most enthusiastic of German Mystics he had ever met with." Before parting it was arranged that he should come to tea on the following Friday evening, the 2nd of September, when she would have Mill there to meet him. Writing to his wife, a few days afterwards, Carlyle gives his first impressions of Mill: "A slender rather tall elegant youth, with small Roman-nosed face, two small earnestly smiling eyes: modest, remarkably gifted with precision of utterance; enthusiastic, yet lucid, calm; not a great, yet distinctly a gifted and amiable youth. We had almost

four hours of the best talk I have mingled in for long. The youth walked home with me almost to the door ; and seemed to profess as plainly as modesty would allow, that he had been converted by the ' Head of the Mystic School,' to whom he testified very hearty-looking regard." A little later Mill called on Carlyle, who, writing again to his wife, says : "At night John Mill came in, and sat talking with me till near eleven : a fine, clear enthusiast, who will one day come to something ; yet to nothing Poetical, I think : his fancy is not rich ; furthermore he cannot *laugh* with any compass. You will like Mill." That description of Mill—his calm, lucid enthusiasm, his gift of precision of language, his lack of poetical feeling and the faculty of laughter, and the forecast of what he was likely to effect and become—gives in few words a singularly clear, comprehensive and accurate reading of his character, as his future career fully proves. At this time he was a young man of about twenty-five (Carlyle's junior by some eleven years), an official in the India House, spending most of his leisure hours in writing for various periodicals. He greatly admired Carlyle, and looked upon him as an artist and master in the craft of literature which he himself was intent on cultivating. Carlyle and he saw much of each other in the ensuing winter, and became very intimate ; and when they parted in the spring—Carlyle then returning home—they began a most interesting and instructive correspondence which continued unbroken until their personal association was again resumed in the early summer of 1834, when Carlyle made London his permanent home. After this they again met frequently, and conversation largely took the place of correspondence. Long walks together and calls on each other were of common occurrence ; and yet for another ten years letters passed between them frequently. But from the time when Mill's infatuation for Mrs. Taylor

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had gained such an ascendancy over him that it "killed the flock of all affections else that lived in him," and caused him to withdraw himself from the society of his old friends, even the members of his own family, his correspondence with Carlyle also drooped and languished. After 1844 the letters are few and far between ; but few though they be, they are still friendly and affectionate, and well worth preserving, were it only to show that neither correspondent forgot the other or failed in mutual regard and respect.

By nature and education Carlyle and Mill differed from each other as widely as the poles ; but they were strongly attracted by their common love of truth and honesty, which formed the real bond of their friendship—a bond that was sometimes severely strained by their dissimilar views and opinions, but a bond that was never broken. Carlyle stated their true attitude to one another when he wrote to Mill : " On the whole, however, when two men are agreed in recognising one another's common recognition of the infinite nature of Truth, there is the beginning of all profitable communion between them ; and nothing is more interesting thenceforth than the friendly conflict of their differences." And so, though their opinions on not a few subjects differed widely and their respective fields of labour lay far apart, the two men remained friends to the end. Mill, in replying to Carlyle's last letter to him (Letter No. 77, *post*), wrote, 12th of April 1869 : " Your kind Note would have revived, if they had ever been dormant, many old memories and feelings. . . . Any communication from you—not to mention your bodily presence—would be most welcome."

John Sterling and John Mill were intimate friends long before either of them made Carlyle's acquaintance. In September 1833, while Carlyle was still

living at Craigenputtock, Mill sent him Sterling's novel, *Arthur Coningsby*, amongst other books ; and a little later Carlyle wrote to Mill: "I remember I rather liked, not *Arthur Coningsby*, yet the Author of it, and meant to ask you who he was." But it was not until February 1835 that he and Sterling saw each other, both happening to call on Mill in the India House about the same hour. They liked each other, and further meetings soon followed. On the 26th of May following Carlyle notes in his Journal: "Have seen a good deal of that young Clergyman (singular *Clergyman*!) during these two weeks: a sanguine, light, loving man; of whom to me nothing but good seems likely to come. . . . He is off today; and will send me (bless him for the favour!) all the 'errors of style,' faults, &c., he has to discover in *Teufelsdröckh*." Sterling made good his promise by addressing to Carlyle the Letter of the 29th of May 1835, which is printed in his *Life of John Sterling*. Carlyle's answer to that is his first letter to Sterling (see Letter No. 78, *post*). The correspondence thus begun, continued, sometimes in an argumentative, but always in a friendly and familiar style, until within a very short time of Sterling's death, which occurred on the 18th of September 1844. His last letter to Carlyle is dated the 26th of August; and Carlyle's last to him, the 27th. In his last, or farewell letter, Carlyle had offered to go down to Ventnor and see his friend once more; but fearing he might only be in the way, he left the decision to Sterling's brother Anthony, who wrote to Carlyle on the 30th of August, enclosing a pathetic little note from his brother to himself, which is still preserved and reads as follows: "I am quite unfit to see Carlyle. His Letter was too much for me: a kinder and better one was never penned by man." After this Sterling rallied somewhat, and on the 14th of September wrote a poem of seven

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stanzas which Carlyle refers to in the *Life of John Sterling* as "some stanzas of verse for me, written as if in star-fire and immortal tears."¹

Carlyle's letters to Sterling (which are all included in this volume except a few that were published some years ago in the *New Letters of Thomas Carlyle*) give a sufficiently clear account of the origin and progress of the friendship between the two men ; if further elucidation be needed, it will be readily found in Carlyle's *Life of John Sterling*.

Robert Browning was introduced to Carlyle by Leigh Hunt, at whose house they met for the first time early in 1840. At this meeting Browning, then a young man of about twenty-eight, took little or no part in the conversation, and left in the belief that Carlyle had either not noticed him or not approved of him. But a little later, at the conclusion of one of Carlyle's public lectures, they both happened to leave the lecture-room together, and Carlyle recognising him, hailed him cordially and invited him to call at Cheyne Row. This Browning did, and continued to do from time to time so long as Carlyle lived. The friendship thus begun was never interrupted ; they remained on intimate and affectionate terms to the last. Carlyle's letters to Browning are not numerous : Browning much disliked letter-writing, greatly preferring conversation ; and as he lived generally within easy reach of Cheyne Row, personal visits to that quarter, where a hearty welcome and copious entertaining talk always awaited him, were far more to his liking. There were only twelve letters to him, and five of the earlier of these were published in the *New Letters of Thomas Carlyle*, so that only seven remain for use now. But few though they be, they are sufficient to show the very high estimation Carlyle had formed of Browning ; and

¹ A copy of these stanzas is given on pp. 276-7, *post*.

what his esteem for Carlyle was, is made evident by the following extract from a letter which he wrote in 1885, to Professor C. E. Norton, who had asked him for copies of Carlyle's letters: "The first of the Letters was written, as you see, forty-four years ago; and the goodness and sympathy which began so long ago continued unabated to the end of the writer's life. I repaid them with just as enduring an affectionate gratitude. It was not I who ventured to make the acquaintance nor ask the correspondence of Carlyle: his love was altogether a free gift, and how much it has enriched my life I shall hardly attempt to say—certainly not at this moment, when I write in all the haste of approaching departure from home."

It cannot be said that this collection of new letters of Carlyle appears prematurely, for two-score years and two have passed since his death. The delay has arisen from the fact that the letters to Mill were not available for publication until they were offered for sale at public auction in May last year and bought by the Trustees of the Carlyle's House Memorial Trust—at whose request I agreed to arrange and prepare them for publication.

I am indebted to the Rev. A. P. Davidson, M.A., for help in correcting the proofs.

A. CARLYLE.

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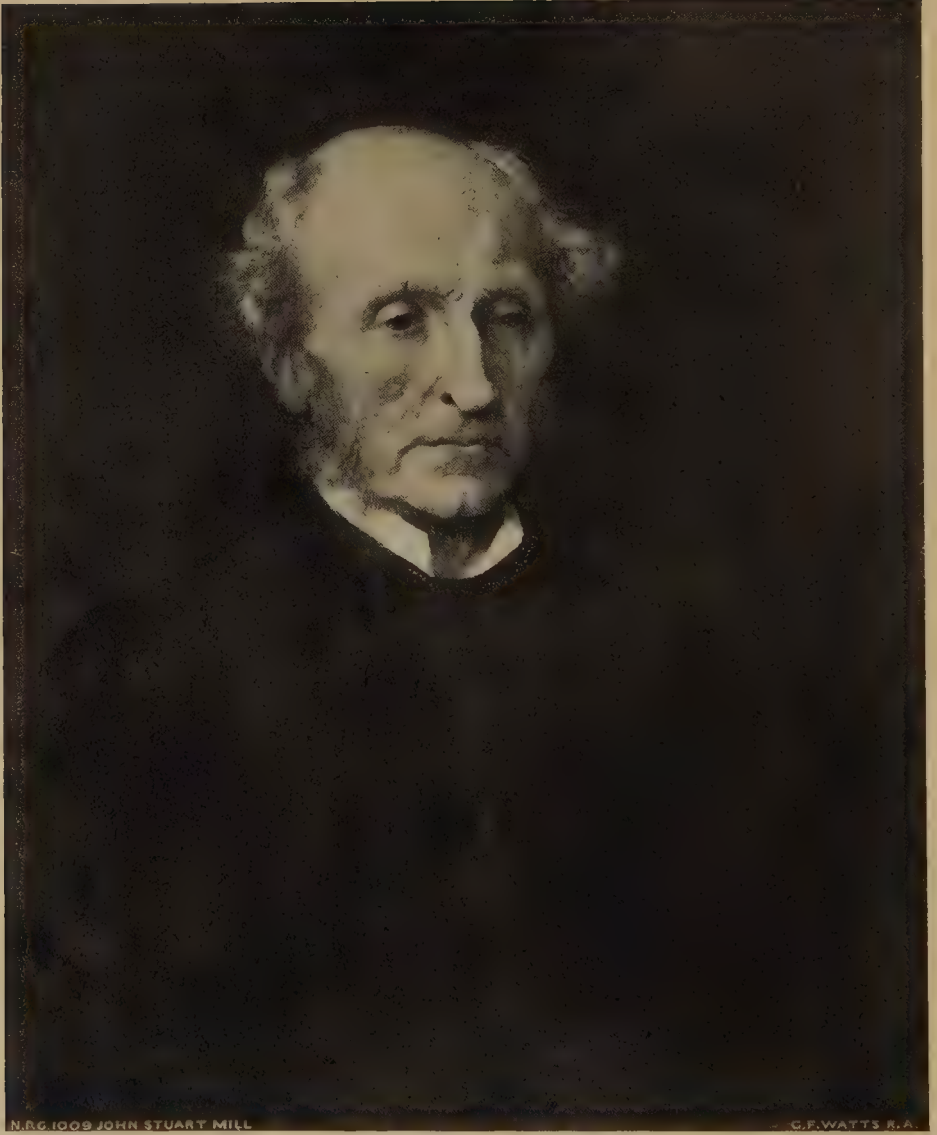
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To JOHN STUART MILL



JOHN STUART MILL, ÆT. 66

Carlyle's Letters to John Stuart Mill

LETTER I

CARLYLE made his first acquaintance with Mill in September 1831. He had left Craigenputtock on the 4th of August to visit London for the second time (he had spent some months there in 1824-5), expecting to get home again in a month at farthest. The object now in view was to find a publisher for his *Sartor Resartus*, the recently completed manuscript of which he brought with him. But the publishing trade was then at a very low ebb ; and after a long, wearisome and unsuccessful search for some one willing to undertake the risk of publishing what appeared to the trade such a questionable-looking book, he was obliged to give up the quest, and pause to consider whether it would be better to return home a discomfited man or to send for Mrs. Carlyle to come and spend the winter with him in London. She came willingly, arriving on the 28th of September, and was met at the coach terminus (the Angel Inn at Islington) by her husband and Dr. Carlyle. They soon got lodgings, at 4 Ampton Street, Gray's Inn Road ; and Carlyle made haste to introduce his wife to his friends new and old, among the former being Mrs. Austin and John Mill. Edward Irving and Francis Jeffrey (then Lord-Advocate), who were living within easy distance of Ampton

Street, she already knew. During the ensuing winter Carlyle wrote in these humble lodgings some of his finest essays, the two most important of which were *Characteristics* and *Boswell's Life of Johnson*. In spite of Mrs. Carlyle's ill-health the winter passed pleasantly ; but with the arrival of spring they both began to long for home and the comforts of their own fireside. They left for Scotland about the end of March 1832, and after visiting their relations at Scotsbrig and Templand, they arrived at Craigenputtock on the 14th of April.—Carlyle himself now takes up the story in the following letter, which, with the exception of two short notes written in London, is his first to Mill.

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK, DUMFRIES,

18th May, 1832.

MY DEAR MILL,

I did not remember, till your silence called it to my mind, that when friends part it is the travelling friend who must write first, and send the other notice of his existence and geographical position. To-day I have a frank to London (or I make one) ; and so transmit to you, in black on white, authentic assurance both that I am *here*, and that some news from you would be very welcome.

My time is too short for entering into particulars. I could write long idyllic paragraphs on the whistling of the Blackbirds, the budding of the woods ; how the people are all cutting Turf for fuel on the moors, and the grouse hatching ; and unhappily the East wind still blowing, and generally a sort of *Reform Bill* of the year, passing itself thro' the Upper House and the Under House, subject as the other Bill is to reactions enough. Suffice it to say that we are here,

safe in our Patmos ; and from the verge of creation send many a kind thought towards some that are left pent up in the very heart of its activity. Greater contrast, as we often remark, could not be, than between the life-torrent of Fleet Street and the whinstone mountains of Nithsdale, where Silence, on her throne of crags, over her empire of heath and bog, rules supreme. Yet the blue Dome, I often say, overspans us here too : "this too is the World, the City of God." Let no man become elegiac, let him be epic and active. "There where thou art, there where thou remainest, be busy, be happy ; let the present time and scene suffice thee." What after all is the world anywhere but a workshop ; your best room in it, that where your tools lie most convenient ? Thus if we rejoice that Brick London and "the smoke of its torment" is hundreds of miles away from us, must we not bear with patience the other feeling that social London too is distant, and the scattered tones of Truth and Earnestness and kind Affection, that used to cheer us in the inane hubbub, are no longer audible ? "Be busy, be happy" ; above all, be busy !

My *Business* since I returned hither has been of a manifold rather than of an elevated character. I have *sticked* pease, set moletraps, rooted out three thousand docks ; endured the horror of two Painters for three weeks ; and scribbled down some pages of Mysticism. That last is my only *work* ; the other is all mere clearing of the arena. I have a busy summer before me ; which in these strange days is a blessing one ought to recognise.

The Corn Law Rhymer ¹ has got his *Article* ; which if it be not of too "doctrinal" a character, you will

¹ The Corn Law Rhymer was a working man named Ebenezer Elliot. Carlyle's article on Elliot and his Rhymes on the Corn Law and other subjects was published in the *Edinburgh Review*, No. 110 (1832), and may be read in vol. iv. of his *Miscellanies*.

see in the next *Edinburgh Review*. On the latter point, however, there are grounds for doubt : I am astonished to find on reading the thing over that it is "speculative-radical" to an almost frightful degree ; and glances, in a poisonous manner, at Whiggism itself. Heaven pity poor Editors in these days ! Men sent to journey among precipices and quagmires at twelve o'clock at night, and the most with hardly the quarter of an eye.—Your three little volumes shall be faithfully sent round by Edinburgh, and forwarded thro' the Bookseller to your India House : if you want them sooner, let me know *soon*, and I will take some speedier method.—A little Paper entitled "Death of Goethe," in Bulwer's next Magazine,¹ is addressed to you among others ; perhaps to Mrs. Austin and you more than others.

I too saw the Wellington revolution,—as I came from my Mother's in Annandale, last Monday. They had burnt their poor patriot King at Annan ; a Butcher was laid in jail for beheading him. The like at Dumfries. Nay I called upon "the able Editor" of the *Dumfries and Galloway Courier*, to see how it went with him ; and found a man fuming and frothing, quite wonderful, like dog distract or monkey sick : "base, scandalous, infernal court-intrigue," King Arthur, and what not. The able Editor's hair was all dishevelled, froth on his lips, a snuff-drop at his nose. Three times, in the void chill night, did I, otherwise melancholy enough, laugh aloud, while driving hither, at thought of that able Editor. Petitions, Addresses, Postponement of Birthday Dinners, and other terrific things were going on. A poor man [told] me that 130,000 men had marched from Birmingham to London ; another had heard some rumour that "the Highlandmen were coming down." *Tout est perdu !*

¹ The "Death of Goethe" appeared in No. 138 of Bulwer's *New Monthly Magazine*. See *Miscellanies*, vol. iii.

For my own share it seems to me that little is lost ; that we know not whether something may not be gained. Here is a Dugald Dalgetty that *professes* to have no principle, except that of fighting as he is *bid*, as he engages himself ; but who can fight, knave tho' he be : we have discharged a Captain Bobadil, a soldier "of principle," but who unhappily did not know what his principle was, wished much to fight for *both* sides, and so stood flourishing his weapons, for eighteen months, in sight of the whole expectant Universe, and drew no drop of blood. Peace be to *him* at all events ! If we are to die, let it be by gunshot and cannonshot rather than by inanition and starvation. But on the whole, let Fonblanque¹ or Bentham or some of these Chief Priests teach the people how to resist the Excise and assessed Taxes, and all and sundry will be most particularly happy to resist them.—The world, as I often declare, is actually gone distracted—with hard usage and insufficient diet. God help it, for I cannot.

Now you must undertake to write a *long* Letter almost without loss of time. I want to know about all London ; about no man or thing in it more than about yourself. Believe this, and on your side lay it to heart. My Wife sends you her kind remembrances,—certified by me to be *genuine*. Write therefore. Affectionate regards to Mrs. Austin, to Buller² (who must write), to Fonblanque and your friend Wilson. We rejoice to see "A. B."³ in the *Examiner*, and could almost think we heard him.

Yours always,
T. CARLYLE.

¹ Albany W. Fonblanque, editor of the *Examiner*.

² Charles Buller, who, with his younger brother, Arthur, was entrusted to the tutorship of Carlyle in Edinburgh in 1822. Their youngest brother was Reginald, who, having taken Holy Orders, became Rector of Troston, in Suffolk, in later years.

³ "A. B." was Mill's *nom de plume*.

LETTER 2

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK, DUMFRIES,
16th June, 1832.

MY DEAR MILL,

Late at night, in the middle of a sleeping household, and of silent moors, I write you this poorest of Notes, to thank you heartily for your Letter, and if possible induce you to write very soon again. You must not balance debit and credit too strictly with me, in that matter ; at least not now, while I am in one of my *chaotic* states, and have lost all faculty of doing anything. Several days ago, I set about commencing another Essay on *Goethe*,¹ which in evil hour I had undertaken for the Foreign Quarterly Editor ; and now is the sad season of dubitation and dislocation when the woodenheaded must sit biting his pen, and see nothing before him but the nakedness of the land. However, I have grown in some measure used to these desperate conjunctures, and know that one way or another light must and will be struck out ; and the waste embroglio of trivialities weave itself into a web, were it only of three-halfpenny calico. It is one of my superstitions never to turn back when you have begun : otherwise this time I should be tempted. Alas, I feel as if both here and almost everywhere else, I were all in the wrong ; still weltering among barren metaphysical coils ; running painfully along many a radius, but never yet reaching the true centre of it all. *Vita brevis, ars longa !* Nevertheless, let us, as was said, *march on*, and *complain* no more about it.

Your approval of that Paper on *Johnson*, credible as it was to me on *your* word, gratified me more than a

¹ "Goethe's Works," which appeared in No. 19 of the *Foreign Quarterly Review*. See vol. iv. of *Carlyle's Miscellanies*.

Stoic philosopher should be willing to confess. Very precious to me is such testimony. 'Tho' a thousand voices cry out, "It is clever, let us praise it"; this is still nothing or very little; only a shade more than if they cried, "It is stupid, let us blame it." But if one sincere voice say deliberately, "It is true, let me do it"; this is much; it is the highest encouragement that man can give to man. So I will fancy you one of my Scholars and Teachers, and rejoice in this relation, and hope from it.

Your news too amused me and interested me. The poor Saint-Simonians! Figure Duveyrier, with waiter's apron emptying slop-pails,—for the salvation of the world. But so it is: many must try, before one can succeed: what too are we but trials; seekers, smoothing the way for others, who likewise will not wholly *find*? The men are to be honoured and loved in this, that they have dared to be men, as they could, tho' the *Gig*¹ should break altogether down with them, and nothing remain for it but bare soles. Such a feat is too hard for above one in the ten thousand; yet for all except very fortunate men, it is the first condition of true worth. As to the Saint-Simonian Sect, it seems nearly sure to die with the existing "Father of Humanity";² but in his hands it may hold together, and do much indirect good. While "the Fancy" remain in England unwhipt and without hemp-mallets in their hands, let the Saint-Simonians remain unlaughed at.

You act the good Samaritan's part in visiting Glen.³ Whether any effectual help can be afforded

¹ The sense in which Carlyle often used the word *Gig* and its derivatives, *gigmanism*, *gigmanity*, etc., is explained by a note in his *Essay on Johnson*: "Q. What do you mean by 'respectable'? A. He always kept a gig" (*Thurtell's Trial*). "Thus," it has been said, "does society naturally divide itself into four classes: Noblemen, Gentlemen, Gigmen and Men."

² The "Father of Humanity" was the St. Simonian leader, *Enfantin*.

³ William Glen, born near Craigenputtock; he had lately come to London to study law; was introduced to Carlyle by Dr. Carlyle. He

him I must admit with you to be uncertain : but, it is said, while there is life there is hope. So intense, diseased, a feeling of Self I have seen in no sane man ; never such faculties of head and heart utterly lamed, and cancelling one another. I love poor Glen, and pity him much : dark days are in store for him, go how it may. And he is alone ! alone ! Bear with him to the last ; suffer much, and be kind,—as Charity is. For myself I am not sure but he is better away from me. What I had to tell him he heard, and having heard it, let us now see whether he will *do* it, or try to do it.

The paper is done, and my Wife's frank will hold no more, tho' there were multitudes of things to say.—I recognised you with much satisfaction in last *Examiner*, in the Notice of Bentham. Brave Bentham ! All week I have thought of that Dissecting-table with a feeling of solemnity. "A character is a completely fashioned will."

There is room for nothing more, but that I remain
Always affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

Your *Corn Law Rhymes* were sent off to Edinburgh (for the Longmans) nearly three weeks ago. From Napier¹ I yet hear nothing, and incline to fancy my Radicalism has brought him to a stillstand : be you also silent.—Along with the Rhymes, my Wife sent her Novels, which she had read with interest. It were unpardonable (tho' she is long since asleep) not to send you her kind regards : she speaks of no one oftener, or with truer regard.—Will you thank Mrs. Austin for the little Note, which I wished only to have

was a young man of great promise, well educated and highly gifted, but his mind, at this time evidently affected, gave way utterly in a few years, and he died in June 1852.

¹ Macvey Napier, who in 1829 succeeded Francis Jeffrey as editor of the *Edinburgh Review*.

been longer : also tell me (as I hope you can) that she has got well. Charles Buller was to write ; but, as his heart must reproachfully tell him, he has never done it.—Write all manner of news ; write everything ; above all write soon, and largely. And so again good night.

Surely Fonblanque is going on at a brisk pace. “The present agreeable Family” (of Guelfs) are greatly obliged to him ; their “King’s Theatre” no less. He continues in great favour with my Mother.

I have not seen *Tait’s Magazine* except No. I., which was very shallow and sandy. No. II. I will get in Dumfries ; and hope it may be better. About *sending* Books more next time.

LETTER 3

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK, DUMFRIES,
28th August, 1832.

MY DEAR MILL,

I have waited several weeks for franks, for your return out of Cornwall, for leisure to write ; and will now wait no longer, but will write without leisure or any other furtherance ; considering, as I might have done from the first, that a few copper Pence will carry this sheet to you in any quarter of the British Dominions, and the mere superscription and signature will find it welcome. Nay probably you *are* returned, and sitting quietly at work in the India House ; wondering a little, I hope, now and then whether the Postman will bring you no news of me.

Your Letters are honest genuine Letters, and always give me great pleasure. I prize much the feeling you entertain towards me ; which indeed is of the

sort the most precious for both parties, that man can bear for man. In your critical estimate of me I can easily enough foresee that a few years will produce a wonderful reduction, and your "Artist" will stand forth in his true dimensions, an honest Artisan : but even this in these days is something ; and always it will be flattering and encouraging that a man of your clearness and cool deliberateness could so exaggerate me.¹ Neither, after all, does our relation depend on that ; nor need any length of years diminish or disturb it ; for it rests on a true basis, and is a relation between two Somethings, and not between two Nothings,—the *ratio* or quotient of *which*, as you doubtless know, is quite indefinite and imaginary, and fluctuates between infinitude and zero.—Meanwhile, be that as it may, I am to reiterate my request for Letters ; wherein too, pray understand, I am not singular but plural, at least *dual*, the Lady also joining in it, with whom you have the honour to be a first-rate favourite. I will beg you also nowise to forget the *historical* department, that of Biography, above all of Autobiography. Remember that we here in the wilderness, far from being afflicted with excess of News, are in a starving state for want of them ; the smallest authentic contribution is valuable. Were you to tell me only that you had met such a one at such a time walking in the Strand "with his hat upon his head," you have no notion what I could make of it in the moors ! All mortals one has known are interesting ; doubly and trebly so those one loves : fancy that I can here know nothing of any one, and would so gladly know all.

We have sometimes been reflecting of late on the *impossibility* of your spending this Vacation with us :

¹ Mill had said in his last letter to Carlyle : " You I look upon as an artist, and perhaps the only one now living in this country : the highest destiny of all lies in that direction ; for it is the artist alone in whose hands Truth becomes impressive, and a living principle of action."

“not only so much that was impossible but so much that was possible is denied one” ! However, we take it for settled, unless something special intervene, that the next turn is to be ours ; and these lone wilds are to hear your voice and mine. We will show you a new phasis of life ; which, as it too lies under the heavenly vault, may be worth looking at, till you have understood it. Perhaps there is no Philosopher in the Earth that now leads so wonderful an existence as mine. Whinstone mountains, peat-bog ; bare wolds alternating with primeval crags and the shade of leafy trees ; peopled with Galloway oxen, grouse and blackfaced sheep, and here and there a brownfaced herdsman : this is my environment. Uttermost solitude ; except my “Life-companion” no human soul with whom to commune : sometimes there are weeks in which one does not speak a word to any other mortal. I have a long Terrace, of two miles or more, called the road of the “Glaisters Hill-side,” where I walk, and look away into Ayrshire, and over the granite of Galloway ; a grim scene, when your Thought is interrupted by hardly any living object, and stretches almost of itself into the regions of Eternity ; for Desolation, Solitude, is the most eternal of things ; left so to himself Man is a kind of preternatural being, and in a Patmos may well write an Apocalypse. Were I of the spasmodic school, I could gnash my teeth, now and then, over such a banishment : but my creed lies not that way ; I reflect rather what deluges of Folly and Falsehood I stand safe from ; in any case, that here also is a Heaven above me, and the first and last blessedness of man : honest work to toil at. So I work with great fury, ride with great fury for exercise, smoke with great fury for amusement ; and ever and anon when I have finished some little thing, dash down for two days into the low country, and see friends ; can still see a Mother and true Brothers, my brave Father

I can now no longer see.¹ On the whole, it is a tolerable life ; and I thank God for it ; and pray only that I may transact it wisely ; and all else wisely that his Decrees may have allotted me. It is only in Idleness that I am unhappy, and contemptible ; and then I deserve to be so.

On Wednesday night come our Papers and Letters.² What a night ! You should hear our little Messenger come trotting in, with groceries, and philosophies, and political revolutions and friendly vows, all packed promiscuously together in his holsters ; and how one starts to think what a week may have brought forth. The Manuscript once despatched, our first clutch is at the *Examiner* ; and we see Fonblanque and you warning mankind of the wrath to come. Here, however, I must mention that our London correspondent from time to time disappoints us (as for example, last week), and there is no *Examiner* ; a most melancholy case ! For which reason I have long proposed stating it to you, and asking whether there was no help. You must understand, our Post-night answers to the Monday of London ; so that a secondhand *Examiner* is perfectly as good for us as a new one. But then the unpunctuality of men ! And one omission destroys one's confidence for many weeks. The question therefore is : Have you (whom I believe to be like myself as punctual as clockwork) an *Examiner* that you can part with for Monday's post, or do you know how such were procurable ? I should like it of all things from *you* ; the writing on the cover is so interesting for its own sake. Tell me if you can do anything. If not, I believe I must order a first-hand Paper, and let it lie wasting its sweetness for two whole days in the desert Postbag.

¹ Carlyle's father had died on the 22nd of January, while Carlyle was still in London. The true brothers were Alexander and James, the other brother, Dr. John, being now Travelling Physician to Lady Clare.

² Wednesday was the weekly market-day at Dumfries.

Did you get your Books? They were sent off, as I announced; they may be forgotten at Longman's, [or] at Edinburgh: tell me, and I will stir again. You offer to lend me books; and God knows I have much need of books. I accept you therefore; send me any new thing you can spare and think interesting; for example, Dumont's *Mirabeau*, Babbage's two Books; conceive that I see in general *nothing* but some Reviews and Magazines, and have the truest pleasure [in] whatever throws light on any human thing. Nay you may have old books that are new to me; could you give me some outline of your stock? I command the Edinburgh Libraries when I exert myself: but I have no right agent there; and often before the Book come my reading time is over. For the rest, this is your method of dispatch: Address to me here "Care of Messrs. M'Kinnel & M'Kie, Booksellers, Dumfries," and leave it with Fraser, 215 Regent-Street; it will come up (once I have explained it to him) fast and cheap with his Magazines. I know another way, if this will not answer. Pray try it soon; and send a long Letter at all events. If you have not got that *Mirabeau*, that *Babbage*, do not in the smallest mind them.

Alas, the sheet is done, and I am hardly beginning. Tell Buller to get into a Reformed Parliament that one may have a frank now and then, and some elbow-room for writing.—I procured Tait's second Number and read your Essay, and found it *true*; all the rest was very barren and unfruitful; I have seen nothing more of it. Six Numbers of *Bulwer*¹ I got also: well-meaning, but narrow, narrow; not the *web* at all, only the mere (political) *listing*. I have too become acquainted with a new phasis of mind; what I would call Oxford Liberalism. Fonblanque is the only clever man among them; a man whom one grudges to see a mere Radical, and thereby obliged to turn all his fine

¹ *Bulwer's New Monthly Magazine.*

spirit into contemptuous bitterness. I saw Buller too ; and endured another dose of poor Pückler for his sake.¹ Two years ago, I remember, " Bishop Heber " was almost equally distressing : for what you understand once, you would fain not be taught an hundred times. Heber, however, passed away, and there was silence ; as again there will be. Buller's Paper is the only reasonable one I have seen on the business. And guess what I am now reading : *Œuvres de Diderot* : 25 octavos, at the rate of one a-day ; whereof you will hear somewhat by and by. For the present it is over.—Write soon. *Vale mei memor !*

T. CARLYLE.

Do you still see Glen ? My Brother often asks about him, and I can say nothing. Be patient, be kind towards Glen : he may be worth it one day. Did he not *write* something about Fanny Kemble ? I said : *Aut Glennus aut Diabolus.*² It is like the first staggering walk of a steer that will one day draw waggons ; as yet all zigzag, splayfooted and heteroclite. William Fraser, I fear, will go over to the Dandies : I shall mourn for him ; there was worth in him ; let us still hope.

And now once more (with new wishes from both of us) Farewell !—T. C.

LETTER 4

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK, DUMFRIES,

16th October, 1832.

MY DEAR MILL,

You must not estimate my eagerness to hear from you by my promptitude in replying : I live in a

¹ An article or two on the German Prince Pückler, which C. Buller had written and published.

² To this Mill replied that as the article on Fanny Kemble was certainly not by Glen, therefore it must have been by the Devil !

region barren of great events ; grudge sometimes to let "the present agreeable Family"¹ derive any Postage from my friends for small ones. Really this latter consideration is not without influence on me : I think, were I a member of a Reformed Parliament, there should no day pass but ten Good-morrows, sure of an unmixed reception, would depart from me ; and, were it possible, fifteen come in. If I have any regret in the prospect of missing my Election, this is mainly it. In the actual case, moreover, before the projected time of your return from Cornwall had passed, I was over head and ears anew in Scribbling ; a business that almost drives me distracted, at least that I cannot bear to interrupt. Late last night I finished ; and now, you see, this morning I am with you.

Your Letter gave me insight into many very pleasant things, in your own faithful way. I beg you will by no means let me lose sight of London ; least of all, of your circle therein ; many things of value for me, lie in it, which may yet become of more value. In London alone of all places in this country have I found some men (belonging to this century and not to a past one) who believed that Truth was Truth : of such men, how obstructed otherwise soever, all may be hoped, for they have attained the source of all. Considered as European Thinkers, our poor Utilitarians make the mournfullest figure : yet in this one fact, that they were the re-originators of *any* Belief among us, they stand far above all other Sects. Young minds too will not *end* where they began ; under this point of view, you and certain of yours are of great interest for me ; indeed, I may say, form the chief *visible* encouragement I have to proceed in this rather hazardous course of mine. And yet hazardous ? What hazard is there ? while I have a whinstone

¹ Fonblanque, in referring to the Royal Family (William IV, etc.), had made use of this phrase—to the amusement of Carlyle and Mill.

stronghold here among the Peat-bogs, as much Potato-ground, and two arms to dig it with, as the natural man *needs*; and overhead the everlasting Heavenly vault, and my SENDER there! There is no other way of it: *jacta est alea*, as Ulrich Hutten said;—or rather, as the old Ecclefechan Blacksmith once, in threatening circumstances, phrased it: “Then, we must just do the best we can for a living, Boy!” Poor old Smeal (that was his name), he toiled faithfully with hammer and anvil, till past ninety, that he might keep *free*, that he might not *beg*: *he* did so; and we—? Shame on us!

But to get on with business. The *Examiner* has come in the most punctual manner, ever since the complaint I made you of it. We will let it alone therefore; at least, till it go wrong again. I think I have recognised little of you there lately: you do not *always* write in it then? Fonblanque, as you say, seems but indifferently at ease; my wonder is great how a man of his sharp faculties, keen genial nature, can *go on* (not to say gallop on) in that course, without bolting. Day after day he declares with cutting emphasis: “Man of Office, this thing thou sayest and doest is *not true*: what art *thou*?”—“A liar, and the truth is not in me,—and need not be sought out of *me*,” the Man of Office would have answered sufficiently for most; nevertheless our friend still asks. That a dull workhorse of an Editor should still ask, with ever new eagerness, is not wonderful; but that a Fonblanque should and can almost surprises me. Is it your prediction that he will abide to the last by Politics? One might regret it: he is of far too broad and generous spirit for that narrow service; which out of England at this day, he would never have gone into. But here too perhaps: *jacta est alea*! Offer him my kind wishes and regards. I feel much sympathy and community with him; but for myself, am quite

weary of Politics ; and carefully avoid speaking of the subject (as far as I can) ; I never do speak of it, without emitting more or less of a sulphurous indig-nation improper for me, or for any one. However, each to his trade.

I have had some late Numbers of the *Westminster Review* : my chief conquest, I fear, was admiration renewed, at the "completeness of limited men." No Westminster Reviewer doubts but *he* is at the centre of the secret, commanding free view of the whole ; and so he "rides prosperously," without variableness or misgiving. Ought it to be so ? I sometimes think, Yes : let every man feel as if his function were the sole one, he will do it the better. You can perhaps tell me, who that loud-spoken, firm-nerved, cut-and-sever Master of Logic-fence there, is, who writes much, often about Corn Laws and Poor Laws ; and must have written (I fancy) that most limited-triumphant Disquisition on the poor Saint-Simonians.¹—By the way, I owe you many thanks for your few sentences on that matter of their Trial, which I had elsewhere inquired after in vain. If you have any pamphlets, books, or even newspaper-leaves about it to lend me, I should still be glad of them. I sometimes even think of writing about it,—in some dialect or other ; had I materials. *Enfantin* becomes quite intelligible to me from my knowledge of Edward Irving. The *Enthusiast* nowise excludes the *Quack* ; nay rather (especially in such times as these) presupposes him. Do you know where *Gustave d'Eichthal* is ? Or what *Duveyrer* makes of himself in prison ? Which is their prison ?

Your promised Magazines were expected last Wednesday, at least partly ; but did not come. The Cholera is at Dumfries, rather violent ; and the people in a shocking panic, so that all communication

¹ Mill replied that the contributor was Lieut.-Col. T. P. Thompson, part proprietor and now almost sole writer in the *Westminster Review*.

is obstructed ; and, a parcel *may* still be there. We shall see tomorrow : happily the disease is fast abating. The terror of the world at this Pestilence is such as if Death had never before been heard of. Nevertheless Death is *not* new ; moreover, come when or how it will, it should find us *at our work*, and thinking mainly of our work.—Do not mind *Tait* even if you had it ; there are enough of them in Dumfries ; and, alas, they are hardly worth carrying even so far, not to speak of buying. What will become of *Tait* ? He is *white-puffing* (for there is a white and a black sort) ; that seems to be his main stay at present ; but by nature it cannot last. The Fox Periodical¹ I shall be very glad to see. I cannot fish out your piece in the last Table of Contents ; where indeed one has few data. I never could make much of Unitarians ; from the great Channing² downwards there is a certain mechanical metallic *deadness* at the heart of all of them ; rhetorical clangour enough, but no fruit for me. Unluckily too they seem a sort of Half-men ; which class of Nature's products one has the least patience with. But let us, in all conscience, *look* first ! I know Fox only by his political Speeches ; the lowest class of human compositions, and these very ill reported.

This thing of mine that I have been writing is a long Essay on *Diderot* ; which you will see most probably in the Cochrane Review,³ this Number or next. It is a wearisome straggling affair ; and to you will not communicate much ; tho' readers enough may

¹ The "Fox Periodical" was the *Monthly Repository*, first managed by a committee of Unitarian ministers, and afterwards by W. J. Fox.

² William Ellery Channing, born in Rhode Island in 1780 ; was a Congregational minister in Boston, then became leader of the Unitarians ; visited Europe in 1822 ; became acquainted with Wordsworth, Coleridge, etc., and died in 1842.

³ I.e. the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, in No 22 of which the *Diderot* came out ; and the "Goethe production" (a few lines lower) is the "Goethe's Works" which had appeared, as above said, in No. 19. Both articles are in vol. iv. of the *Miscellanies*.

learn from it, if they will please to look. Cochrane informs me, with hair on end, that the general or rather universal opinion about the *Goethe* production was—*unfavourable*! Good Heaven! had not “the age of miracles” ceased? I answer poor Cochrane as I can: the proper answer would have been *a glass of brandy*. In my own secret heart, I know that Paper to be not a stupid, yet a baddish one: the problem set before me was of the impossible kind; this was the approximation I could make to it. To *elucidate* that subject to English readers, at this point of time, lying beyond me, nothing remained but to coruscate round it with what fireworks one had; uttering in any case nothing but what seemed true, so far as it went.—You are very charitable in construing my hydra-headed method of publishing myself—thro’ so many monstrous Periodicals all at once. Alas, it is that I have no better method; otherwise it were to be named a bad one. I had hoped that by and by I might get out of Periodicals altogether, and write Books: but the light I got in London last winter showed me that *this* was as good as over. My Editors of Periodicals are my Booksellers, who (under certain new and singular conditions) purchase and publish my *Books* for me; a monstrous method, yet still a method. “Allah is Great,” as the Arabs say: there is ever *some* resource left; and Meditation, like Murder, will out. A question often suggests itself, Whether we shall never have *our own* Periodical Pulpit, and *exclude* the Philistine therefrom, above all, keep the Pew-opener (or Bibliopolist) in his place; and so preach nothing but the sound word? The Answer, however, comes not. Meanwhile: Speak! Preach! The Night cometh. Where men are, there is an audience: “You may make a Pulpit by inverting any Tub!” To such strange shifts are we reduced. *Ay de mi!* Often I think it were delightful, could I have leave to sit wholly silent for

some three years from this date, till I had got to the bottom of many things! But that too was not appointed, let us on then, *getrosten Muthes*!

October Tirl-the-Trees is busy here, has made the moor very savage. We are for Edinburgh in a six weeks or so; to see how the world wags there. Radicalism! Radicalism all! Another edition of Churchill's "Hunger, a Pastoral"! Nevertheless let us hear for ourselves *how* they manage it. I once loved Edinburgh, and still do not hate it. I hope some day you and I shall see it together.—Has Napier yet sent your Books? I am quite shocked to find the state of things; and dread it is not yet rectified: I have found the man very remiss in other matters. Tell me, at all events, and I will *poke* him again.

My Dame begins to get surprised that Mrs. Austin does not write. We keep hoping however that it is not *distress* of her own or Husband's that prevents her. Is the *Falk*¹ soon to be out? Were Falk a Boswell, *there* might be a Book. But Boswells are almost as rare as Johnsons.—You will now be quite master of Cornwall transactions: tell me if Charles Buller accounts himself quite sure of Liskeard; what he is doing, meaning to do. A fine faculty is in my good Charlie; it were a thousand pities he should go to waste.—I am but beginning to write; and my poor sheet, save it as I may, is done. If among your modern French Books you can spare me any that really illustrate the late condition of that country (under *any* of its aspects) they were highly welcome. Politics of course is one aspect; not for me the greatest, far from that; yet the easiest come at—thro' Books. Any tolerable History of the Revolution I could still read with interest. I am very curious about France. Indeed I thank Heaven

¹ Mrs. Austin, who was an enthusiast in German, was now busy translating Falk's *Memoir of Goethe*.

I have still a boundless curiosity about all human *things* : it is only *simulacra* of things that I cannot away with. Unfortunately, however, I can get *no* knowledge ! “ White men know nothing ” : in the original it stood “ Black men,” but holds this way too.—Write to me the first moment you have ; and be always sure of my affection. *Vale et me ama !*

T. CARLYLE.

Encourage *Glennus* ; rebuke *Diabolus*.—Could not Wilson[†] have turned in hither as he came or went ? He should have been welcome.

Now that I remember it, in the last Number of *Fraser* there is a Prophecy called *The Tale*, by *Goethe* : if you know the original, and have guessed at it, the commentary (which is mine, as well as the translation) will interest you a little. I am all wonder at it.

T. C.

LETTER 5

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,

19th November, 1832.

MY DEAR MILL,

A packet goes off for London to-morrow ; in which a sheet for you is not to be forgotten. Your long Letter, which I found at Dumfries, one week after date (for the frank had been too late) stands admonishing me. You are now my main Voice from that Babel ; and I would not have you many days silent,—any day were it possible.

The Parcel which brings you this is the *Diderot* mentioned last time : the able Editor seems to have established himself in your neighbourhood (Kensington), and is therefrom minded to illustrate Foreign

[†] John Wilson, a London friend of Mill's, was at this time visiting Edinburgh.

Literature with more vigour than ever, and do business in the great Mother of Dead Dogs : Heaven give him all success ! For my own share, I find him a well-meaning, rather thick-headed, rude-bred mortal, who if you hold him tight does well enough ; a sign he is of the Times ; to me there where he sits and works, almost a prodigy. His last Number is here ; but I have read none of it, except the Essay which you said was Buller's, a rational, considerate sort of piece, wherein however as you well know the main mystery of the matter is never looked in the face. I am sorry to hear of Poor Charles's health, and still more of his inapplication : a kindly, genial nature ; clear, productive, with a rare union of decision and benignity ; it is a thousand pities he should waste himself : yet nothing can be surer in this world of ours, than that he who will not struggle cannot conquer. Alas, it is a most tough obstructed wild-weltering world wherein the stoutest swimmer is often carried far from his aim. *Ernst ist das Leben* ; earnest enough ! You cannot fight the battle in dressing-gown and slippers ; and yet there is nothing for you but to fight,—or sit there and be butchered by Destiny. “Nevertheless,” as our Scotch Preachers say, “I hope better things, tho' I thus speak.”

As for myself I have written nothing since you heard of me. I drove with my Lady over into Annandale, by wild Lakes and water-courses, villages and farm-towns (*Zäune*, enclosures), all still, grave-looking, almost sad ; a moving text for a wild moving homily, such as I perhaps too often preach to myself. Do but know that the word *ae* means *river* in the Anglo-Saxon speech ; and find here a “Water of AE” (by whose banks too your progenitors were born),—the rushing of its stream carries you back into ancient Ages, into the “great and famous Nations of the Dead” ; and all Existence, with its Death-Life, and never-resting, all-bearing, all-devouring TIME,

seems no other than verily a prophetic *Dream*.—On the whole, wish it or not, this wondrous World in its most natural aspects gets more and more of a super-natural character for me : that I now hold this pen is perhaps intrinsically as *miraculous* as if I should make the Sun. Everything is wonderful ; *et ce que j'admire le plus c'est de ME voir ici.*

We returned home ; but new distractions arose ; some of them mournful enough. Of this sort was the Death-sickness and finally last week the Death of my Wife's Grandfather :¹ we had both to go over, not for his sake only, but for his Daughter's, our Mother, who herself needed support. On Friday, I saw the old man depart peaceably—forever ; always a sad and grandly stern sight, were it never so anticipated. Next Friday he is to be laid in his grave ; and so for him after four-score years the world is ended. He was a peculiar old man : *impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer*, or as we have it in Scotch, “as het as ginger, and as stieve as steel.” When one thinks how many men have lived, and have died, what is one man, what is this one man that asks the question !

But to leave these homiletic things ; for the true precept is not *Memento mori* but *memento vivere*. Intellectually speaking, you perceive, I have done almost nothing ; not even read. For a day or two I occupied myself with the life of one *Thomasius*, a German of the 17th Century ; of whom probably you have never or hardly heard ; nor is it great pity : he is but a sort of German Toland, only weaker : the Biographer, one Luden, has since become notable as Historian of the (old) Germans ; but was then in his spiritual nonage. A far richer subject that I

¹ Walter Welsh, Mrs. Carlyle's maternal grandfather. Though this Walter's name was Welsh, he was of a totally different family from the Craigenputtock Welshes. The two families were connected by the marriage of Walter's daughter, Grace, to John Welsh, of Craigenputtock, Mrs. Carlyle's father.

happened very incidentally to resume, was the History of our Church of Scotland. I know not if ever you enquired much into that matter : but I think it is one you would find well worth knowing. The materials are abundant, and easily accessible ; your Father can doubtless point you out the whole path. Two Books, the *Scots Worthies* and the *Cloud of Witnesses*, written, I believe, by some old Cameronian Peasant of the name of Howie, used to lie in every Scottish house or hut ; a pair of true People's-Books ; and truly worth more for a People than all that the Diffusion Societies will promulgate for a generation or two. It is not ten years since I, an enlightened sceptic, first deigned to look in them ; but my reward was great : they are in fact most notable Books. My present guides were of a far inferior sort, McCrie (with some *Memoirs*), and one Cruikshank, an old Calvinistic Dissenter with a *History*. I have got Knox too, and will by and by make a trial for Wodrow. The History of the Scotch Presbyterian Church is noteworthy for this reason, that above all Protestant Churches it for some time was a real Church ; had brought home in authentic symbols, to the bosoms of the lowest, that summary and concentration of whatever is highest in the Ideas of Man ; the Idea unutterable in words ; and opened thereby (in scientific strictness, it may be said) a free communication between Earth and the Heaven whence Earth had its being. The practices of Power against Revolt, in that remarkable Revolution (of which 1688 was but the falling of the curtain), are notable in another way,—namely a scientific and poetic. A true Scotchman can weep warm tears over these brave men (among the last true men of this Island), and execrates with a divino-diabolic indignation (immeasurable either way) the scandalous Debauchee, to whom in virtue of Plush and Parchment, and the name of King, such power over them was committed.

—I really think I could like well to write a most immortal Book (in small octavo) on that matter. But, alas, there are no Books to be written now, unless you have an independent money capital,—which unluckily is not my case at present; and luckily perhaps, for who knows? I should add, in farther excuse of this zeal, that my good Wife is a Cameronian by birth; a lineal descendant of John Knox himself;¹ and of two John Welshes (for the later of whom I am bound to observe always a *double* rogue-money is offered); and therefore I say one of the best-born women in broad Scotland. Welsh, it ought to be added, lived within four miles of this house; and for aught I know may have preached on the *Laird's Crag* itself, where now nothing but ravens preach. You shall see all this when you come; and much more.

For tho' we go to Edinburgh together, you cannot avoid taking this place in your way, and staying here till you satisfy yourself about it. Unadulterated Bogtrotters are to be seen in these parts (for everywhere under the sky there is something special); waste moors, as old as Noah: you shall ride the very road, where Burns, galloping against the stormy weather, composed *Bruce's Address*.—But alas, it is very long till then; and much must be waited for, and much may alter.

I saw your notice of the *Doctrinaires*, and recognised it before the Letter came; I have seen one other that I think of since; but last week the *Examiner* again

¹ This genealogy is exceedingly doubtful. Old John Welsh of Colliston (which lies close to Craigenputtock) was the father of three sons, the eldest David, the second John, and the youngest Cuthbert. It was the second son, John, the celebrated "Minister of Ayr," who married the third and youngest daughter of John Knox, whilst David, the elder son, succeeded his father as proprietor of Colliston and lived there all his life. John, ever since his boyhood, lived far away from that locality. It is therefore far more likely, if not absolutely certain, that Mrs. Carlyle was a descendant of David and not of John Welsh, Knox's son-in-law. See *Life of John Welsh*, by the Rev. James Young, Edinburgh, 1866.

forgot to come, for the first time these many weeks. I am to write to my Provider : if no explanation, above all if no improvement follow, we must try your man, or some other method.—Fraser the Bookseller[†] informs me that he has received from you and forwarded by Simpkin and Marshall “ a large packet of Books ” ; they will come in the first week of December. Have Napier's Books ever arrived ? I am quite ashamed (if it would do any good) ; for whether Napier's or Longman's be the blame, the debt must lie at my door. However, it is happy that you have not wanted them much.

I enclose you here a small Note for Leigh Hunt. If you like to make use of it as a Note of introduction, send your card up with it ; and it will serve for that end, for you are mentioned within. But my chief aim was to know that the little memento reached its destination, for I have sent one already, and got no tidings of it ; and Hunt, worthy man, is of those unfortunate people whose *address* is often *changing*. Will you therefore ascertain (Moxon the Bookseller in Bond Street, Bulwer, and many others can say) what Hunt's actual address is ; and then either deliver this, or (correcting it if needful) send it by the Postman. You will find Hunt a most kindly, lively, clear-hearted creature, greatly to be sympathised with, to be honoured in many things and loved ; with whom you will find no difficulty to get on the right footing, and act as the case will direct. Hunt is a special kind of man ; a representative of London Art, and what it can do and bring forth at this Epoch ; what was too contemptuously called the “ Cockney School,” for it is a sort of half-way-house to something better ; and will one day be worth noting in British Literary History. Under this view too Hazlitt is

[†] James Fraser, editor of *Fraser's Magazine*, was both bookseller and publisher ; he is not to be confused with William Fraser, editor of the *Foreign Review*.

markworthy ; his *Examiner* Biographer, as you say, does not get to the bottom of him, being indeed himself apparently still involved in the same element. That Talfourd, however, must be a rather vigorous person : if you know him, and could persuade him to write a hearty, most descriptive, that is to say altogether *narrative* Life of the poor Sophist, it were a good service : he was a man of such emphasis as should not be forgotten. One of the best Books I read last winter was a quite off-hand delineation of a German Literary Quack, of less moment than Hazlitt ; one Müllner ; a kind of Editorial Napoleon (in the worst sense of poor Napoleon), who built himself an Empire, and had taxes (wine enough to drink, cigars too of which he smoked *über 5000 Stück jährlich*), and adulation and what not ; which lasted while he lasted, and then—returned into the bosom of Nothing, whence it (miraculously enough) arose. Every man that means *anything* deserves that you should hear his meaning, and understand it. But on the whole, few Englishmen can make the smallest attempt at writing Biography : they are a poor mode-ridden and otherwise hag-ridden people ; hunting after Respectability, in perpetual terror of missing it ; and so write, as they do all other things, in a state of partial paralysis. Poor Hazlitt, I fear, will pass away without Biography.

This is a longer Letter than you ever wrote me : however, it too must end. You will write soon again. We do not go to Edinburgh for a month or so ; what our address there will be is not yet known : we are for a small furnished house somewhere in the fieldward part of the Town, and will take a servant and many etceteras with us. Messrs. Bell & Bradfute, Booksellers, Bank Street, will always know our whereabouts. But you shall hear from me before then yourself. It is I chiefly, and not my Helpmate, I think, who form the moving power in this little

Enterprize : she seems in secret to prefer the wilderness,¹—where if you saw our Stack of Peat and Coal fuel, you might fall dumb with astonishment. But what are the warmest fires ; what is the securest whinstone stronghold ? I long for the sound of human voices, were they only those of Edinburgh *Dilettanti* and *Philosophes*. Radicalism enough I can utter for myself, whenever I open my mouth ; enough and to spare.

From the Lady Austin we still hear nothing ; but give *Falk* the blame.—I shall be very glad to know Fox and all your friends that will let me, when I see London again. Thank Heaven, all men have become once more interesting to me ; all, the very *Dilettante* sort, are “fearful and wonderful,” if one consider them well.—And so God bless you, my dear Mill ; and good night for once !

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 6

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

18 CARLTON STREET, STOCKBRIDGE, EDINBURGH,

12th January, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

Your Letter lay here on the Mantel-piece, to greet my arrival on Monday night ; the reading of it seasoned our first cup of tea, and already gave us something of the feeling of home. I must now write to you, very hurriedly ; were it only to bring our correspondence once more into train. Any interruption of it were a loss to me at present : there is something in your honest fellow-feeling, and *klare*

¹ A strange preference, if Craigenputtock was “the dreariest spot in all the British dominions !” On this occasion, to please her husband, she did accompany him to Edinburgh ; stayed there over four months, was generally ill—for a while seriously ill—and only regained her usual health after she had returned to Craigenputtock.

Theilnahme, that I could not afford to part with. Man is infinitely precious to man ! This truth one should know ; and along with it the other truth, which I for many years too exclusively insisted on, that man is sufficient for himself.

We arrived here, under clouds of cigar-smoke, in perfect safety ; and during the next two days, our rather multifarious luggage had also come to hand uninjured, and been arranged in its new repositories ; and again one could in some measure say, *Me voici*. We have a really pleasant spacious habitation here ; on the northwest verge of the City ; the Water of Leith flowing by not far on the right ; left and straight forward (for we front two ways) broad clear spaces with huge trees growing thro' the pavement, where multitudes of rooks are even now making a quite rustic melody. Edinburgh, which I wish you *were* here to see with me, is but a kind of village compared to London : to me with my former impressions still fresh, it all looks inexpressibly contracted, orderly, snug, as a village should ; to which feelings also the many known faces you meet on the street contribute. Thus we have a pleasant feeling of *homeness* ; and want that mighty roar of the London Life-torrent, which was alternately one of the most saddening and one of the most inspiring sights I ever looked on ; altogether a prophetic-looking sight. This place is called by the country people *Auld Reekie* ; yet the reek here is but a faint breath of blue incense to that horrid flood of Spartan black-broth one has to inhale in London ; fogs and mud therefore we happily consider as left behind us. On the other hand one must put up with much that is spiritually *kleinstädtisch* ; for example, I heard a man yesterday three times over characterise M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, with a look of true enthusiasm, by the epithet "stupendous." I feel indeed that no John Mill will come in on the Wednesday evenings here ;

but a much fainter sort of spiritual worth must suffice. One man of a sincere character, (as I understand the word sincere,) would never yet turn up for me in these parts. However, we must look again : we have engaged this house (properly a Floor, as you have seen in Paris) for three months ; in such environment till the Spring weather return you can figure us.

I have seen Napier, and set him anew to work about these Books, which he fancies to be here with Adam Black : what the result of his efforts has been I yet know not. A vexatious business ; about which however not to spoil your kindness I will not vex myself : if the Books be lost, you must let me replace them, and there will be the end. Napier I find is an old acquaintance of your Father's : I hope to find something in him, for he is not without force ; meanwhile, however, he listens with silence and amazement to my Teufelsdröckism ; being himself a solid old-established Edinburgh Whig. A plentiful species here ; which begins to see, however, that the world is wider than it fancied, and to have qualms enough. The Radicals, I believe, are but a rabid, distracted, avoidable set of men, of the Hunt and Cobbett sort. Tait I notice has enlarged his windows very much ; and hoisted a standard of Pasteboard inside, whereon in huge parti-coloured letters I read only : "MAGAZINE." The man himself I have not yet met with.

The other Book-packet came safe ; and what is more, has now been all pretty faithfully perused. I find little of worth for more than a day in that *Repository* ; only one Paper which brought any kind of movement into me ; the authorship of which I could have sworn to after the second page. It is a very true thing ; the writer comforts you above all by this, that he has himself evidently begun to see what a quite infinite difference there is between *Schein* and *Seyn*, by which great act of vision alone

do all others become possible. I shall be very glad to get your next Paper, and endeavour to tell you faithfully what I think of it. That reproof of the half-and-half *Globe* Editor I recognised in the *Examiner*, as I generally do your hand there.—*Thiers* is a rather good Book,¹ and has taught me several things. I read it over with great avidity ; following anew the developments of that frightful world-drama with a new interest. What chiefly attracts me, however, is a face of the matter in which M. Thiers unfortunately is rather uncommunicative : what I might call the private biographic phasis ; the manner in which individuals demeaned themselves, and social life went on, in so extraordinary an element as that ; the most extraordinary, one might say, for the “ thin rind of Habit ” was utterly rent off ; and man stood there with all the powers of Civilization, and none of its rules to aid him in guiding these. There is much that I would fain investigate farther in this sense : if you know any other Books that might forward me, would you name them, for I am now beside Books. For instance, any Book about the state of the Prisons, the behaviour of the Prisoners, under Fouquier-Tinville’s reign ? I have heard of a work expressly composed of *Bonmots* uttered on the scaffold then. Those *queues* formed at the Bakers’ shops, and generally that whole business of the *Assignats*, how it worked and was endured, struck me as worth looking into farther than I could yet look. Does Say or any of their Economists communicate a clear idea of these things anywhere ? I do not so much as understand sufficiently what an *Assignat* was ; and wished often I had been there to buy one when they were so cheap, that I might see how it was worded. Then again, is there any Life of Danton ? Three men especially impressed me in that whole Revolution : Mirabeau, Danton, Bona-

¹ *Histoire de la Révolution Française* (10 vols., 1823–27).

parte. The rest I think were mostly but common men in an uncommon environment. Danton I pardoned many things, and pitied heartily at last, the rather as I was wont once to talk of him *à la* Walter Scott, simply as a "Tiger," and imagine that *this* explained him. By the way, has not M. Thiers a most wonderful system of Ethics *in petto*? He will prove to you that the power to have done a thing almost (if not altogether) gave you the right to do it: every hero of his turns out to be perfectly justified in doing whatsoever—he has succeeded in doing. This seemed to me notable; with much else in Thiers; his affected touches of the Tacitus kind; his hard, mechanical, all-for-politics disposition: characteristic, I imagine, of the modern French School generally. That *morality* of his especially leads far if you enquire into it,—which here, alas, I have no room to do.—I have the Book *Thiers*, and the others, here with me, and will take care that they be not lost in an Edinburgh Warehouse; but wish to examine some of them a little further, if you do not need them immediately.—My Scotch Church-History studies have also advanced a little; strangely blended with these French Anti-church ones; with which however they are not so incongruous as might seem. Knox's *History*, written in Scotch, with great emphasis, and a certain sardonic humour, has amused me: I find in Knox one of those unmanageable fellows who once for all have taken in hand to act and speak not respectably but honestly; and have no manner of notion that God's truth should alter its attitude for men's pleasure, be the man who he may: a true Reformer, of the sort much wanted now and always, seldom rarer than now.

You infer that I have written little; not perhaps, which is the fact, that I have written absolutely nothing. Conscience will not much longer suffer this; I seldom write from any cause but the terrors

of an evil conscience. What it is to be I cannot yet tell : my doors of utterance are so wonderful, one knows not how to shape thoughts such as to pass thro'. My head, as ever, is all buzzing with the Seen, the Problematical, the dim forecast of the Unseen : at every new stage, one has a new Reform Bill to pass for oneself ; and then, alas, the old Temples and Theatres are all closed up, and nothing remains but the Synod of Periodicals. A troublous Time ! Meanwhile, *employ* it, lament not over it, for *so* doing thou altogether lovest it. Now, however, I must pause a moment for business' sake. I have a commission or two to trouble you with again.

Will you for one thing intimate to Cochrane (39 Edwardes Square, Kensington) by the Twopenny Post or any way that I am here, under this address. Secondly, in regard to the coming of the *Examiner*, I am in a sort of puzzle which you shall now judge of. My consigner is one Thomas Holcroft (a Son of the Dramatist Holcroft's, brother-in-law to a Mr. Badams¹ a very old friend of mine) : I wrote to this Holcroft, six weeks ago, a Note enclosing one to Badams ; they went by the same packet that took your last ; and, alas, about ten days after returned to me thro' the Dead Letter Office, Holcroft having left the Adelphi "not known whither." Nevertheless the *Examiner* comes, and will continue to come (round by Dumfries) like a blind physical event. What am I to do ? I bethink me that Holcroft is a Reporter (or was, and had long been, at least) on the *Morning Herald* : you can now determine whether he is discoverable in that way (or failing this, I daresay "Place the Tailor" knows of him) ; and if *yea*, then I will ask you to write him a Note, saying that I am here, and want the *Examiner* here,

¹ Dr. John Badams, whom Carlyle first met at Mrs. Montagu's in June 1824. On the Doctor's invitation, he spent some six weeks with him in his home, Birmingham, in July and August following.

and Badams' Address and his. . Do you comprehend this, and will you perform it? Then are you quit of me for one time.—I had much to say about friends, and somewhat about yourself: there is no room for it now. I half expected the Advocate¹ would come to-day, and give me a frank; but he has not; so "the present agreeable Family"² must just profit by you again.—We did not see Glen, nor hear of him: I will still desire you to keep an eye on him, and do for him what you can, at worst be sorry for him. To Fonblanque I again send my good wishes: he must carry his ballot-box ere long I think; nothing can be said against him there, for the truth must not be said. I agree with you that Roebuck may do something: he is not great, but he is *sincere* (I saw his *Rousseau*, and so judged of *it* too): and in all times the Believer is he that conquers, the Infidel is he that is conquered, and blown away.

Mrs. Austin's Letter I found at Dumfries, as I rode down into Annandale to see my Mother before departing: I broke it open there, and read it in the privacy of mine inn. I suppose my Dame will write soon: present my best wishes in the meantime, and congratulations on the near ending of *Falk*.

Can you tell me what is this Miss Martineau? A Socinian Liberal? Young or old? I believe Fonblanque exaggerates her wonderfully; yet is she evidently no common woman.—When is Buller to be in Town? That is a sad business of his health, coupled especially with his lavishness of Time. We will still hope.—I *must* end here, tho' I feel as if the half were forgotten. The Lady sends her love to you; also to Mrs. A., to whom she "will write so soon as *her mind is calm*"! I now subscribe myself

Ever faithfully,

T. CARLYLE.

¹ Francis Jeffrey, Lord-Advocate for Scotland.

² Fonblanque's phrase. See *ante*, p. 17, n.

LETTER 7

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

18 CARLTON STREET, EDINBURGH,
22nd February, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

This morning, which forms a sort of pause in certain small scriptory proceedings of mine, I devote of right to you. I might have written weeks ago, indeed, so far as occupation went ; for nothing could be more ineffectual, languid, than my style of working (as I call it) : however, a sounder sort of excuse remains for me in the grievance of ill health. For above two months, more especially since I came hither, a pitiful sneaking sort of catarrh has hung about me, strangely laming all my movements ; these last few days, I am better again ; but still in this, as in many other respects, must reconcile myself to grave impediments. "They are soon *done*," our Scotch Proverb says, "who never *dought*" (*dowed, taugten*). But again the French say : *Il faut se ranger*. So without more Sanchoism, let us even get under way.

I really wish you would write to me oftener. Besides the comfortable, available intelligence your Letters bring, there is a most wholesome feeling of *communion* comes over me in your neighbourhood ; the agreeable memento : Thou art *not* alone, then ! . . . How pleasant the voice of a brother Eremite, a flesh-and-blood Reality (in better heart and health than yourself), at sound of whom the Devil and his works duck down into the Inane ! Write to me, I pray you, with more and more heartiness ; show me your feelings as well as your thoughts ; and let us in all ways, while so much is permitted us, help one another as we can. "What is cheerfuller than Light ?" says some one : "Speech," is the answer. *Speech*, however ; not Cackle.

I cannot call myself disappointed in regard to Edinburgh, for it corresponds with my forecastings ; yet I experience the pain and partial surprise of witnessing in detail the outline, vague and distant, fill itself up into palpable reality near at hand. It is a City this in which as little wholeness exists as anywhere else. Sufficient Hodmen, here and there, we have ; no Builder in any, even the smallest kind, can I yet meet with. . . . On the whole I will predict that in this country, as in France, the movement, political and other, will proceed from the Capital. No Benthamite, or Islamite, or other even false Believer, exists here that I see: innumerable respectable Whigs, that know not the right hand from the left, and desire of all things to eat their pudding in peace ; numerous distressed, partially distracted Conservatives (they too are *numerous* in the *washed* classes) ; a small forlorn hope of half-rabid Cobbett Radicals like the condemned vanguard of the Crusades led on by "Walter the *Penniless*" : this is our condition in respect of Politics, whereby you may judge of us in others. . . . Meanwhile we have this to say of Edinburgh, that it feeds and clothes itself and produces young children enough ; and so *keeps alive*, if it do nothing else ; and stands ready for a better day, should such dawn on it.

In the midst of all this, I for my own small share must feel as if I had got into strange latitudes, and could not for these many months take any sure Lunar. The sneaking catarrh, as you may well judge, is no help to me. In truth, I am very considerably bewildered ; few landmarks in the Earth, yet God be thanked, some stars still shining in the Heavens : I can only say with the old Hebrew, in my own dialect, "*Still* trust in God, for Him to praise good cause I yet shall have" : so stood it in my Father's Psalm-book ; pity for me if so much stand not also in mine ! On the whole, in this wondrous

condition of all things, Literary, Moral, Economical, there is need of courage, of insight ; which may the bounteous Heaven, withholding what else it will, supply according to our need. On one point, I am getting clearness : that it is not good for me to stay much longer in the Nithsdale Peat-desert. I will leave Craigenputtock, before *very* long : but where I shall settle ; here, in London, or where, is as dark as may be. Poverty and a certain deep feeling of self-dependence (often named Pride, but I hope *mis-named*) complicate the matter much. We shall see. “ My son, before all thy gettings, get *understanding* ” : now as ever, this is verily the one thing needful. For the present, I think of waiting without much motion till my Brother the Doctor return from Italy ; perhaps his place and mode of settlement may help to determine mine. John loves me with a brother’s love ; is a man of strong faculty, of the truest heart : it is really one of my best joys of late to discern clearly that he too is fixing himself on the everlasting adamant, and *may* front the Devil’s-chaos beside me, also like a man. In these scandalous days, such a brother is a treasure : alas, unless Nature have accidentally *given* it to you, where shall you seek for Friendship ? I often wonder over the love of Brothers, over the boundless capacity man has for Loving : why has this long-continued Baseness, Halfness and Hollowness so encircled him with cowardly distrusts that he *dare* not love !—You shall see John, were he once home ; I imagine, some relation may spring up between you : at lowest you will learn to respect each other.

But now I must answer you on the matter of these Books, while I have yet Paper. You will do me a real kindness, I think, by sending all of your French *Mémoires* that touch on the points specified : no part of that Collection seems to exist here ; nothing but scattered fragments after Petitot’s series ends. The

Cent-et-un I can get ; not certainly so the *Neuilly*. I retain my whole interest for that matter, and am gleaning here as I can. A series of Revolution Portraits (engravings) which I dug out lately, gave me great satisfaction : under each head stands, in a miniature compartment, the main scene he figured in ; it is a valuable work, if genuine. Mirabeau's ugliness is now a kind of truth for me ; Danton suffered dreadfully, on physiognomic survey ; alas, his *energy* looks too like that of some Game Chicken or Dutch Sam, true heroism never dwelt in *such* a tabernacle. I fear Thiers has quite misled me. Lafayette looks puppyish ; Robespierre like a narrow, exasperated, exacerbated Methodist Precentor (in fact, I think the man was a kind of Atheistico-Theist-*Saint*) ; Camille Desmoulins is full of spirit, talent, half-blackguard gaiety, one of those Blackguards, among whom Burns said he had found the only men worth loving.¹ My favourite face of all is the noble Roman one of Condorcet : a lofty soul looks out there (tho' perhaps an *unbelieving* soul) ; energy grown listless ; deep sadness, tedium, veiled over with stoical disdain. Tell me if these heads are reckoned genuine : the Book is in folio, and bears date, I think, Paris, 1810 ; nearer description I cannot give you.²

Junius Redivivus, except in the *Examiner*, has not come in my way ; on your recommendation, I shall be glad to make acquaintance with him. I have seen some of Miss Martineau's Books ; and reckon your

¹ See Burns' *Common-place Book*, March 1784. Carlyle at this time had seen only inaccurate extracts from this book : Burns does not say he had found among Blackguards "the only men worth loving," but, "I have yet found among them, not a few instances, some of the noblest Virtues, Magnanimity, Generosity, disinterested Friendship and even Modesty, in highest perfection."

² Mill replied that he had been credibly informed by one of the editors of the *National* that the genuineness of many of these Revolutionary Portraits was very doubtful, and that Danton's especially grievously wronged him.

account of her quite verisimilar. She is a surprising *young lady*; but has got far too soon to a conclusion and maturity: her Tales are no Artist pictures, and cannot anywise be; but good Twopenny Book coloured Prints whereby catachumens, if they like, may learn the *Alphabet*. I hope she will not *stop* there: the very Saint-Simonians could still teach her much. She and her Tales are surely a sign of this Country and Time. Her works will do great good; the acme of the *Laissez-faire* system, a crisis which the sooner brings cure.—The day is now up and bright; it is fit to walk, as well as to make hay, while the sun shines. You must *soon* write: what should hinder a young able fellow in the heart of a Reformed Parliamentary Metropolis to write *twice* for my *once*? You really ought to consider.—Do you see anything of Glen? I fear you have given him up as a weariness, which really he almost is: do not wholly give him up; while there is life there is hope.—Forget not the Saint-Simonian Books; I am quite glad to hear that d'Eichthal has bid the Father of Humanity good day.—Of the Reformed Parliament I study to take as little heed as possible; its performance hitherto has not disappointed me: O for a few Members "*worth* electing"! But, patience; these are coming.—Our love to South-Bank. My Dame sends you a message so flowery that I cannot take upon me to report it.—Wishing and trusting all good,

T. CARLYLE.

What is become of Detrosier? I saw a new Secretary's name in that Union: poor Rowland, struggling upwards out of mephitic air, is far from indifferent to me.—Send or take this Letter to Glen.

LETTER 8

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

4 GREAT KING STREET, EDINBURGH,
21st March, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

Will you accept this feeblest Apology for a Letter, and write to me again, till I have time to answer you more deliberately.

You do your nature great injustice ; as I can well discern, who see some *ten years* farther into it than you. However, this also was among your endowments, that you should be unconscious of them, and even prove their existence by sorrowing for the want of them. For the rest, go on boldly, whithersoever, you have Light to go. To all men, whom God has made, there is one thing possible : to speak and to act God's Truth, and bid the Devil's Falsehood, and whatsoever *it* can promise or threaten, an irrevocable farewell. For no man is there properly speaking any more possible. I rejoice very deeply to convince myself by clearer and clearer symptoms that you have chosen this "better part" ; and so I prophesy nothing but good of you. But we will talk all those matters, far more at large, in August ; which will be here by and by.

One other thing gives me pleasure, that your interest in Politics abates rather than increases. Your view of that matter corresponds perfectly with my own : a huge chaotic Deluge of floating lumber, mud and noisome rubbish, in which is fixation or firm footing nowhere. "Cast *thou* thy seed-corn on the Nile waters ; thou shalt find it after many days." What thou doest is of most uncertain moment ; that thou do it *truly* is of quite infinite moment. So believe ; so have all good men, from the beginning of the world, believed.

I am grown a little better, both in body and mind. These wretched East winds are still to be tolerated : but the business of assiduous scribbling comforts me ; heartfelt *writing* would make me forget everything, only *this* is not always possible. I have written a long half-mad kind of story about the Archquack *Cagliostro*, which you will see some time in some Magazine or other. I feel half-tempted to burn it ; nevertheless let it stand : it is all moderately true, tho' written about a grand Falsehood. One is rather sadly off with these Magazine-vehicles (Dog's-Meat Carts, as I often call them) : however, it is once for all our element in these days ; let us work in it, while it is *called to-day*. The sheets of *Diderot* were all fairly corrected two weeks ago ; you will see it in the next Number of *Cochrane*.

Happy that you have found those Books, at least found some trace of finding them ! It saves Napier from a heavy charge which Black the Bookseller here advised me to bring against him : namely, that they might still be lying in his own house ! I will choose a surer re-conveyance next time. Certainly too you will at length find the Parcel in some crypt of the India House : it was a common brown-paper one, perhaps about a foot cubic ; had your name written on it (too faintly it is like) yet probably as large as a Pen would write it. Fraser's Parcel will be here in two weeks : if W. Fraser's Book¹ cannot be got readily, do not mind it.

I saw Buller's speech the night it arrived here : but could form little conjecture about its value or reception : I apprehend his infirm state of *lungs* itself would prevent great success there. In any case "bursts of parliamentary eloquence" are, in these days, among the absurdest of things. Pray tell me about Charles, if you ever see him ; also about the

¹ *Levasseur's Memoirs*, which William Fraser had offered to send to Carlyle by Mill's parcel.

elder people, whose probable losses I am sorry to hear of. It is a most kindly feeling that still connects me with that family.

Leigh Hunt says, I must "rebuke you" for not bringing that Note yourself : he has long had a desire to know you. So whenever you feel called that way, the road is open. The return also will be open ; that is to say, Hunt is a most *harmless* man. I call him one of the ancient Mendicant Minstrels, strangely washed ashore into a century he should not have belonged to. For the rest, unless you feel *called*, it is not worth while to go : he has nothing to teach you, nothing to show you—except himself, should you think that worthy.

For poor Glen's sake I am sorry to have lost him. Nobody here has any connexion with Glen : in London, I can only bethink me that he used to visit at Basil Montagu's, 25 Bedford Square (you have seen Mrs. Montagu, and my name and your own were a sufficient passport there for enquiry) ; farther that he was a member of the *Literary Union* : and, what perhaps is the best chance of all, entered Student in Lincoln's Inn. The Letter is of no manner of consequence : keep it for year and day ; and then, if it be unclaimed, burn it.

Hayward, somebody tells me, has out his poor Translation of *Faust* : "the cleverest of our second-rate men," I doubt, will but have made a bungle of that business. However, it is published at his own expense ; of his own right-hand a man is master.—What think you of this other piece of gossip, currently believed here : That I was living in the closest sworn-league, last winter, with Fonblanque ; and even (it was probable) a guest in his house for some months ! Poor "suffering remnant" of Conservatives ! They knew me to be no Whig, and fondly trusted I might stand by altar and throne : alas, "the deep-seated, silent, slow-burning, inextinguishable Radicalism fills

me with shuddering admiration."—We have two blustering Turkey-cocks lecturing here at present on the Negroes : one an Anti-slaver ; the other a Slaver that follows him Ibis-like to destroy his Crocodile eggs. They fill the emptier head with vague horror and jarring. While we, under soft names, have not only Slavery but the fiercest *Maroon War* going on under our very noses, it seems to me philanthropy and eleutheromany might find work nearer home. But names *do* change things.

My brother writes to me he has met Gustave d'Eichthal at Rome ; rather out of spirits, and not fond of speaking about Saint-Simonism. He professes himself still "ready to reverence, but not knowing what to reverence." The way with many ! "Reverence Thyself : that is the highest reverence."

Our united regards to Mrs. Austin : I think it is she who owes me a Letter now.—*Und hiermit Gott befohlen !*

Ever affectionately,
T. CARLYLE.

[P.S. by Mrs. Carlyle.] You will observe that we have changed our lodging. He has sent no compliments from me—but you know my true affection and respect is always yours.

J. W. CARLYLE.

LETTER 9

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

4 GREAT KING STREET, EDINBURGH,
18th April, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

Tho' but in poor writing order to-day, I may as well send you a word ; another day, if my unhappy headache lets, my time may be scantier. Your Letter,

tho' rather speedier and not slower than usual, had been long looked for ; there is still nothing here resembling you that I can fall in with ; often it seems to me as if all men had engaged to one another that sincere speech should cease and determine, and henceforth nothing but a hollow jargon without significance, arising in no belief and producing none, should form the utterance of man to man. It is a miserable mockery, a thing one's heart gets sick of even to nausea. But what is the remedy ? This only : do *thou thyself* then speak ever the more truly ; ever with the greater abhorrence avoid that same hollow jargon-ing, as a thing at once ridiculous and (looking at its consequences) lamentable and detestable. I have a hundred matters to talk over with you : more than whole paper-quires would hold, had I whole weeks to write them in. Let me still calculate with certainty that we shall meet face to face in August ; in the middle of the wild moors there will be rope enough, and neither tongue need be tied. Glory to God ! there are still here and there on the Earth some articulate-speaking mortals ; the highest, mysterious Gift, that of language (for "man is properly an *incarnated word*") has not yet utterly dissipated itself into mere chattering and cawing ; there is still communion for man with man. So let us wait ; and do not you disappoint me.

Those long fits of depression¹ are a thing too well known to myself ; indeed, with me they have stretched themselves into long continuous years, and but for what we call happy accidents, what we might more piously call kind orderings of Providence, would have ere now brought me down to final desperation. They originate very variously ; the Physical and the Spiritual playing into one another's hand in the most mysterious way. But in any case they have, as you

¹ In his last letter to Carlyle Mill had complained much of periods of dejection, etc.

say, their blessed fruits. For what, if we consider it, is any suffering be it what sort soever ? but a *disorder*, as is well said, an extraneous thing which *we* (our free will and force) are summoned to triumph over, and make into an *order*. Thus in all spiritual maladies the sole cure is : Bestir thyself manlike ; valiantly give battle to the enemy and defy him ; in *so* doing thou hast already conquered. “ Evil is but a Nightmare,” says Jean Paul, “ move thyself against it, it is already gone.” But, indeed, so old is the phenomenon with me, that I have now grown to look upon Pain as almost the *necessary* precursor of new light ; as if Thought were a thing that really needed to be travailed with before it could be born ; and the Minerva sprang from the head only amid fire and after the frightfullest megrim. Often therefore like you, in lucid moments, I say to myself : be still, rejoice even ; thou wilt be all the wiser for this ! Poor Leigh Hunt, I remember, once said, he knew a man of true thought to have been a man of sorrows by this alone that his thought was true. The Frenchman remarked of Goethe’s Picture : *Voilà un homme qui a eu beaucoup de chagrin* (Goethe says it should have been “ that has struggled toughly ”) : a still higher instance, the highest of all, on this head, will at once suggest itself.—As for poor me, if my increase of wisdom is to be in fair ratio to my late disquietude, I shall have made a rich venture of it this winter ; it is among the saddest (from ill health outward and inward) I have known for long.

But now to quit speculation. The Book-parcel which you as my merciful provider have got together for me, still lies at Fraser’s : he wrote to me a week ago to that effect : I directed him to send it hither with his first-of-May Packet, at which time it will still find me, and be in good season. Doubt not, your Thoughts on Poetry and Art will deserve my fullest attention : what I make of it you shall honestly hear.

Alas, in these days, all light sportfulness, and melodious Art, have fled away from us, far away ; not in Poetry, but only if so might be in Prophecy, in stern old-
v Hebrew denunciation, can one speak of the accursed realities that now, and for generations, lie round us, weigh heavy on us ! But we shall not enter on this. Speaking of Fraser, let me not forget a second time to answer you that the writer of that *Byron* (according to my guess) is no disciple of mine, but of Coleridge's : one Heraud, who lives at Tottenham, looks better on Paper than otherwise ; a meritorious creature, nevertheless, who from the depths of some Law-Stationer's shop could contrive to appropriate an Idea or two (even in Coleridge's sense), and re-echoes them in long continuance,—I fear, as from *unfurnished* chambers. Poor Heraud, if you could by any means *economically* forward him (which is not likely, for he seems to *have* bibliopolic vent, and is a kind of Torykin), were worth your acquaintance, but hardly otherwise. As for De Quincey, I have not seen him this winter ; and no man, except Bailiffs, it appears, has for the last eighteen months : he is said to be in the uttermost unaidable embarrassment ; bankrupt in purse, and as nearly as possible in mind. I used to like him well, as one of the prettiest Talkers I ever heard ; of great, indeed of diseased *acuteness*, not without depth, of a fine sense too, but of no breadth, no justness, weak, diffuse, supersensitive ; on the whole, a perverted, ineffectual man. Some Papers of his on the Roman Caesars in *Blackwood* are the last I know of him : Teufelsdröckh might well pause in amazement to find Nero and Commodus thus treated as having “something sacred” still,—in virtue of their purple clothes. De Quincey is one of the most irreclaimable Tories now extant ; despising Poverty with a complete contempt ; and himself, alas, poorer than ever Job was, who at worst never got *gazetted*. The Conservatives here, I think, are

wholly in a very fretful, tremulous condition. Wilson¹ himself, tho' he loves me, would evidently rather not meet me ; I have seen him only once, and perhaps we shall hardly meet again. There is no man in the Island who has so wasted himself : a mass of Power standing on *no* basis ; drifted about by every breath ; lamed into the despicablest weakness. Pity enough !² Yet Nature is *infinitely* rich : the two eggs one eats at breakfast could have filled the whole world with winged creatures, and they are swallowed at one meal, and no damage done. So too with *geniuses* ; a thousand can be spent apparently ; if one gets to maturity we shall be content.

I read Roebuck's *Education* in *Tait*. Roebuck has a conviction, a true one, but hopelessly mechanical and narrow ; a lean, perseverent, unappeasable nature ; reminds me somewhat of Robespierre : he wins respect from me but not love, almost the reverse. Buller, as you often say, is the only Radical of the smallest genius ; I rejoice much to hear that he promises to give himself fair play : one day we shall hear more of him. Out of Parliament there is another, and but one that I know of : friend Fonblanque, speed to him ! Yet, after all, the contest, as I view it, is but a mean and meagre one. Democracy (like enough without either Lords or King) at no great distance from us, as from all Europe ; and *then* ? It is very doubtful to me whether the best possible Reformed Parliament, made of the best possible men, could *govern* in our old world.—Nay, is not Democracy and Reformed Parliament essentially the solemn declaration that there is *no* Government, that every man governs himself ? In America they do beautifully without governing of any kind ; for

¹ Professor Wilson, *alias* "Christopher North."

² For a more deliberate appreciation of Wilson's character and work, see Carlyle's essay on him, written in 1868, and published in the *Nineteenth Century and After* for January 1920.

this peculiar reason, that all men can *guide* (or govern) themselves towards the Western Prairies. But alas for us who have no Prairies, when if we find not new Captains (the old sham-captains being justly bundled out) the mass of men must perish miserably, trodden under foot of each other ! Unhappy age, to which this sad task of Revolution was appointed, and could not longer be delayed. As to myself I look forward to it with the sorrowfullest interest ; round on it with dispiritment, with a powerless pity which really amounts to pain. "Bursts of Parliamentary eloquence" and millions of living souls sinking hourly in all senses to the Devil. A Committee of enquiry which must doom some hundreds more to a death by "cotton-fuzz" ; as certain and far crueller than if the Committee had shot them at once. Devil's drink (because it is of distilled *Barley*) left untaxed, and bread and pottage taxed ; in both cases, that the rent may rise. Bursts of Parliamentary eloquence still going on, and Hell and Hunger still reaping their abundant harvest. Out upon it ! One cannot look at it without a mixture of horror and contempt. I declare my prayer was that I should hide altogether from hearing of it ; but that may not be. In these circumstances a gleam of hope rises on me from what you may reckon a strange quarter ! James Stuart's *Travels in America*. I read the Book two days ago ; a most stupid Book as far as talent goes, but to me most cheerful. It reminds one again that there is still a corner in God's Earth where the man that will work can live : all men in that happy Western climate are secure from Cold and Hunger, and defy the fear of them. *Gloria in Excelsis !* The very shoeblack sits dining "on one of the fattest roasted geese we ever saw." Here is something ; a door of hope from our worst misery is here open. What too is America but a *piece of England* ? These are our brothers (and do no discredit to the house), let

his Majesty in Council say to it what he likes. I venture also on a prediction : America may prove the safety-valve of England, of our old over-crowded Europe : farther, unless some extensive far-reaching system of Emigration be organised, the result in a few years must be a rebellion fearful to contemplate ; the fierce implacable rebellion of Hunger and Ignorance against Wealth and Idleness, whose very imbecility has become tyrannous, deadening and killing. This idea has long had deep hold of me : Stuart has blown upon it and set it astir ; perhaps it may not stop here. Here however my scribbling must stop, tho' I had still whole volumes to tell. Write again soon, and give me another opportunity. *Vale et me ama.*

T. CARLYLE.

P.S.—We do not leave Edinburgh till after the 3rd or 4th of May. Your *Thiers*, &c., will be sent off before then ; to the India House again, if you do not direct me otherwise. Nothing, I trust, will be missing this time.

I glanced into Alison's Book lying on a table. He is an Ultra Tory, and therefore cannot understand the French Revolution ; otherwise, they say, a man of considerable ability ; his margin bears marks of great inquiry (*Thiers* and the like I saw quoted almost every page), the man too was in France and published *Travels* : by all means *review him*, and in the widest vehicle you can get. It is a thing utterly unknown to the English, and ought to be known. Speak of it what *you* know. If Alison prove stupid dismiss *him* the sooner, but tell your own story freely without fear or favour.—*Coningsby* ¹ I will read if I can get it. I have read three volumes of the *Cent-et-un* : your

¹ A novel written by John Sterling, who was destined to become and remain for the rest of his life one of Carlyle's most intimate and best-loved friends.

1833]

CARLYLE'S LETTERS TO

opinion of French Literature, and St. Simonism, is accurately mine, so far as I can form one. Duveyrier, I fear, is but a kind of Dilettante, as such millions are.

LETTER 10

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

EDINBURGH,

1st May, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

Before flying off, which we are minded to do next Tuesday, I must send you a word. You know where our address will be ; I only remind you that now the season for it enters.

A week ago I sent up all your Books to Tait, who engaged the day before yesterday that they should be more effectually packed, and despatched by steam on Wednesday (this day) with a Twopenny Letter advertising you of their address and arrival : so pray act accordingly. As Tait is a very punctual man, I can flatter myself all this has been accomplished ; I will ascertain it, however, before my departure, and apprise you if anything have failed. Could I once hear that you had got that other packet out of the India-House labyrinth, it were all well. The Books sent on this last occasion were : *Thiers* (10 voll., one broken in the back, and which *was* so) ; *English in France* (3 voll.) ; and I think six Numbers of the *Repository*,—all that I had. A brief *invoice* went with them ; on the back of it your address. The Fraser Packet I still expect to get here, before setting off.

The *influenza* has not seized us ; we had enough of mischief without it. On the whole, I have learned nothing this winter ; scarcely once indeed heard a thought which seemed to have any the smallest significance : however, there was contradiction in

abundance ; and contradiction itself is a kind of instruction. I feel as if in spite of Morpheus himself I have laid in considerable matter for thinking of ; as if in the very Darkness I have had to drink my fill of there lay the possibility of clearer light. The men are all stupid with an inconceivable stupidity ? Well, grant that ; learn to know it, and how to deal with it. *This* world, and no other, was the world thou hadst to work in : kick not against the pricks ; smite where it is softer.

At some moments I have the sickliest misgivings about the vocation of Literary Men, of Speculative Men at all, in this epoch ; I dream of bursting out into quite another sort of Activity : this will require the deepest deliberation. God send me right ! Once on the right way, you fear nothing : the Devil and the world at his back cannot prevent you advancing thereon,—as far as your strength will carry you, which is exactly as far as need be.

Yesterday in some Newspaper I saw a sentence quoted from the *Monthly Repository* about Books and Men, which was curiously emblematic of my own late thoughts. If it was not you that wrote it (which I fear), then there must be another Mystic in England, whose acquaintance I should gladly make.

Hayward's *Faust* is not nearly so bad as I thought it would be : considered as a matter of *Business*, he has really done it most handsomely, and his Book (Glossarially) is worth *something* : there is even here and there a touch of *elegance* ; and no mistake (which Dictionaries, consultations or the like could remove) of any moment. The *Prolegomena* are very perfect in their kind ; altogether worthy of our "cleverest second-rate man," and will do good as far as they go.—The *complete* original *Faust* is now come ;¹ I am to begin reading it tomorrow.

In Literature, I rather predict, nothing considerable

¹ See *Goethe-Carlyle Correspondence*, Appendix, p. 331.

will or can be done, for a long long while. Economically it is utterly embarrassed, the Bookseller System being more and more clearly dead and done : spiritually it is no less embarrassed, for I defy you, at this day, strive as you will, to think of anything but one black, barren, galling fixed-idea : the Death-Birth of the world ;—wherein, for the time, speculation is not wanted, but prompt practical insight, and courageous action. What is our inference from that ? There are days when I could determine to turn my back on this sickening really painful scene of Hunger and Hollowness, and fly to America where the people have at least something to *eat* and to *do*.

But the thing I now have to *do* is to fold up this sheet. You have now two Letters—of a sort : pray delay not. Take care of the influenza ; think of August and us.

Ever faithfully,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER II

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,
13th June, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

We had been here, in the midst of sunshine, greenness, and the deepest quiet, for some ten days, when your long-expected Letter arrived as you calculated. I might have answered you sooner, for I have seldom been idler : but indeed that holiday stillness which descended on me when the dull and small and despicable discords of Edinburgh once lay behind, and I saw myself again dropped among the moors, was a thing so grateful to me, so wholesome-looking too, and withal so unusual, I could not find in my heart to interrupt it. You would smile if

you saw my late employments ; I myself could either weep or smile, but prefer to do the latter. This day again I was about rolling off for Annandale, to carry down my Mother who is visiting us here, and in hope to meet my Brother or hear of him : but it proved a wet morning ; so you have me for better or worse, and I shall the sooner have you. Imitate me in anything you like so to honour me in ; only *not* in my delays to write, when I fall into that sin.

You do well, and needfully, to vindicate your right of *ME-hood*, having well admitted so many rights of *THOU-hood*. Every given man, if he be a man at all, looks at the world from a position in several respects his own peculiar one : let him look at it faithfully from thence, note faithfully and believe heartily what he *sees* there. It will not contradict his as faithful brother's view, but in the end complete it and harmonise with it. " Each man is the supplement of all other men " : this is a saying worthy of entire acceptance. It was no secret to me that you and I differed over a whole half-universe of things, for indeed I think we stood at opposite sides of it : nevertheless I will by no means fancy with you that we are moving *from* each other, but quite contrariwise. On the whole, however, when two men are agreed in recognising one another's common recognition of the infinite nature of Truth, there is the beginning of all profitable communion between them ; and nothing is more interesting thenceforth than the friendly conflict of their differences. Hesitate not, I pray you, neither in this August nor at any other time, to show me the whole breadth and figure of your dissent ; God knows I need guidance, both as to my own state and that of others, very much, and then it is hardly once in the twelvemonth that one hears the smallest true monition, any word of criticism worthy of aught other than instantaneous oblivion. About you I will not prophesy here ; meanwhile I

have my own anticipations, and in any conceivable case must watch you with deep interest.

Perhaps you are very wise in that self-seclusion you practise, in spirit-sickness of such a sort ; yet also perhaps not. There is inconceivable virtue in Silence, yet often also in wise communing of man with man. If you know any heart that can understand you, that has suffered the like of what you suffer, to that heart speak ; the very act of such speaking brings assuagement, almost healing. I prescribe not as physician ; but warn you that if you hide yourself in August, it will be *very difficult* to find an excuse that can pass here. For the rest I may say, for your comfort, that such *relapses* as yours appears to be, are of common, nay I believe, of universal occurrence among the Faithful : on the blessed day of "conversion" (this is still the only name I can give it) one's path seems thenceforward all plain and clear ; nevertheless it proves nowise so ; but a path, of various fortune, to the last, wherein all the victory we look for is the heart to fight on. Thus too in the physical world, what is all *walking* (or advancing), as the mechanicians tell us, but "a succession of *falls*" ? Will you understand me if I say there is still no Book in the whole world where I find the Spiritual Warfare of Men tenth-part so faithfully delineated, so cheeringly too, and instructively when once you have got to *read* it, as in the Jewish *Book*, well named the Book of Books ? I protest, it is even so. In fine then I bid you go on unflinchingly, not resting till your "Doubting-Castle" Prison is burst asunder ; *love* the Truth, and the Truth now as heretofore *will* make you free.

Those Books came about a week before we left Edinburgh ; were bundled off unopened to this Hermitage ; and are now read, I think, every word of them. Is it of any importance that they be sent immediately ? I believe I ought to admit that I

have as good as done with them ; yet some vague thought of turning them to farther advantage still lingers in me. A great result lies in these so intensely interesting Narratives ; and *might*, had one the faculty, be drawn out of them ; this were what I should call the highest kind of writing, far higher than any kind of Fiction even of the Shakespeare sort. For my own share I declare I now enjoy no other Poem than the dim, shadowy as yet only *possible* Poem, that hovers for me in every seen Reality. There is much here ; of which I know not the limitations, the worth or unworth ; meanwhile the feeling cleaves to me these many months, and seems decidedly to grow in me. Whereby at least you as my Book-provider may judge accurately of my actual taste in Books : I simply love all Books that offer me the Experience of any man or men, that give me any fraction of the History of men ; on this side nothing can be more catholic than my taste : but in return all Speculation is apt to be intolerable to me, except in two cases : when it is of the very highest sort ; or when, as itself a historical document, I find it interesting for the sake of its interesting author. I doubt you will find intolerance here ; but really how can I help it ? I have wandered thro' long dreary years in endless mazes of speculation till my whole heart was sick ; and hung sorites on sorites ; and ended ever in Inanity : till at length the whole business was happily swept to the right and the left, and I found with amazement that the thing I wanted was not Telescopes and optical Diagrams but *eyes* and things to *see* with them. In any case, by all means, send me that *Poor Laws* Book ; adding to it, as your kind use is, all things you have within reach that point the same way. The St. Simonian *Trial* was better than any Drama I had read for years ; that whole business, with d'Eichthal's Letter, and the *vieille serviette* about

his ears in the Faubourg St. Antoine : all is at once a chimera and a truth. Poor Gustave ! I love him better than I ever did, as he is seen there ; neither will I ever despair of his fortunes outward or inward, when all these crudities (for him the nearest possible approach to *food*) have been happily removed far from him—part to the *larder* (if you will forgive the figure), part to a much uglier place. But on the whole is not the French character, as shown in these last two generations, in their Revolutions first and second, a very barren, very lean one ? Never was a nation worse prepared with individual strength or light of any kind for a bursting asunder of all old bounds and habits ; the old Sansculottes had only the strength to kill and to die : and then these new figures, with their Bankrupt Projector of a God-man, and all this of the *femme libre*, and their inability to speak *till* she appear (and *vote*, by ballot or otherwise)—did the world often witness the like ? I declare it is deeply interesting, yet lamentable exceedingly.—I have read *Levasseur*, as I said ; but learned little from him : Thiers has most of it, in better state, already. The man *Levasseur* seems but a quite common Radical, and it is fatal to the *Mémoires* that properly they are not his. But those of the *Prisons*, it was *there* that I could “sup full of horrors,” and manifoldly interest and instruct myself. If you have anything more in any measure resembling them (tho’ of “horrors” I had perhaps more than enough) I shall be very thankful for it. *Madame Roland* is but dim in me ; her *French Mémoires* I never saw, and the Translation, many years ago ; pray send the former if you have them. And so, enough of Books.

However, I have still to thank you for that Essay on *Endowments* ; the Author of which I at once guess ; as my Mother too does, far as it seems to lie out of her way : she and I approve of every word of it ; she

even carries down one of the copies to a certain Parish Parson, a great stickler for the other side.—Doubt not also that I carefully read your little Essay on Art. It is an honest considerate Essay : I do not properly dissent from anything in it ; I would only add much to it. That characteristic you fix on is worthy of noting ; I find in it indeed a kind of relationship with that old *Unconsciousness* which, as Goethe hinted to me, is an element in most great things : however I do not figure it as the *great* characteristic. Would I could help you forward ! But no man is less versed in logical Defining than I of late years ; and perhaps one may doubt whether Poetry is a thing that Science can *define*. As for me I am accustomed to see some remains of meaning in that vulgarest of all notions that Poetry is Rhyme ; and like almost better than any other form of speech to say to myself that Poetry is not poetical if it be not *Musical* ; if it be not in *thought*, as in word, music. This is not good in Logic, but it helps me a little to know at least myself what I mean. As for the Germans (or rather the Kantians with Schiller at their head), they seem to insist much on this as the grand criterion of Poetry, of *Kunst* in any kind : that there be an *Unendlichkeit* (Infinitude) in it. To me this at first had next to no meaning ; but year after year it has got more : do you also try it, and I predict for you the like. There are great depths in that matter, which is well worth thought. We shall speak of it in August.

Did my Brother find you ? His last Letter said you were not at the India House, that day he called ; but he would try again. I am very anxious to see him, and what has become of him these last two years : I believe they have been *decisive* for him.—Alas, here is the end !

Ever affectionately yours,
T. CARLYLE.

I am sorry to hear from Mrs. Austin their purpose to remove to Germany ; yet what can one advise ? Austin's is a hard case. Of Politics it would astonish you to find how little recollection I have here ; me it quite gratifies. Fight they who esteem it an infinite cause ; there are plenty of such. The news of the Lords' majority itself hardly dwelt half a minute with me, tho' the Tory Informant looked wonders.

Alas, alas ! I have a stern tale to tell you of poor Glen. He *is* in Scotland ; but in the saddest of all human states without crime. His disease is deep, bodily and mental ; whether without hope, or with it, and with what kind of it I will tell you when my own enquiries (thro' obscure enough courses) have yielded. O Heaven ! I cannot get the poor fellow out of my thoughts. What is it that *we* complain of !

Do not say that a man's power of working is "infinitesimally small" ; properly it is infinitely great, and goes thro' all Eternity : to himself it is so, and to his Maker. For the rest, the Earth itself, with all its mankind, is undoubtedly but a *mote*.

Junius Redivivus is an effectual kind of fellow, of good Radical stuff ; drives the nail *home*, sees not what it will *split* in its course. Do you yet know any more about him ?

LETTER 12

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRIAGENPUTTOCK,

18th July, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

The worst news in your Letter is that of the problematic state your visit still seems to be in ; you indeed are better than your former word ; but my Brother (who expressed himself much taken with

you) had led us to suppose that the matter was as good as fixed. Of you certainly one can ask nothing more ; we shall pray only that circumstances may prove favourable, or that your resolution may be *great* to vanquish them. Come, I say, and let us get fairly *acquainted* with you ; we shall make more progress face to face amid these solitudes than by the present hampered method in three years. You are worth getting acquainted with, I think ; and as for me you know that at bottom I am a very inoffensive sort of fellow, with whom if you gain little, you have not to fear losing much. “ Under false pretences ” at least, I imagine neither of us will work.

Without appraising, still more without *depreciating* your theory about the uses of Logic and your own peculiar vocation that way, I can heartily rejoice to see you go forward, as I do, with more and more assurance and emphasis in setting forth by the fittest manner whatsoever conviction is in you. A man’s theory is valuable simply as it facilitates his practice ; neither is there any other way of correcting it where wrong but by practice alone ; for indeed till we have *tried* and *done* we can never know what power there lies in us to do : our actions are the kind of mirror in which we first see ourselves. Add to this that seldom indeed are we without wish sufficient to attempt whatsoever we *could* perform ; that such wish is properly the dim instinct (often so falsely interpreted) of our ability.—I see you err, if at all, on the safe *defective* side, and so bid you confidently hold on while it will endure with you.

There was the strangest old Schoolman (in a new body only forty years old) at Edinburgh last winter, with whom I had long conferences once or twice about Logic, such as, in a higher strain, I could willingly renew with you ; but not here ;—nor perhaps anywhere were it of moment. My similitude

was always : Who is he with a pair of *stout legs* that cannot walk, whether he anatomically know the mechanism of the muscles or not ? The grand difficulty, I think, with us all is to *see* somewhat, to *believe* somewhat ; a quite mystic operation, to which Logic helps little ; to which, proclaim what laws of vision you will, nothing but an *eye* will be of service. Neither, as I apprehend, can a *believing* man by one means or another readily fail to utter intelligibly his belief, and so *infect* others with it (for at bottom it figures itself to me as a kind of divine infection, to which Logic—properly the art of *words*—is at best a *conductor*) ; at all events he can translate it into conduct, and that is a thing which he that runs will read. Most of this, you see, straggles hither and thither, and falls harmless over *your* head : thus I fulfil my intention, of both letting you alone, and indicating where I myself am.

As to that of producing an effect and so forth, let me not startle if I say that I could never get any good of such calculations, or almost any. Who *can* calculate his effect ? You remember I used to speak of William Burns, the Poet's Father ; and paradoxically, yet not without truth, declare him, the poorest of day-drudges, yet a brave, true man, to have been the most important (effectuallest) British person living in his time. Let us consider this, what degree of truth there *is* in it ; and pause amazed over the continual impenetrable mysteriousness of Nature, the transcendency there is in all her ways ! Every Act, every Word, I say often, is a *seed-grain* cast into all Time, into all Space, to work there, perhaps to grow there—forever. This is no figure of speech ; it is a scientific fact without hyperbole in it. What light then have I about the effects produced by me ; what light of estimate *can* I have ? The thing that is *given* me to do, or to speak, that my inward Daimon as the old times called it, commands of me, that I

cannot forbear doing or speaking, that thing let me do or speak. Be the issues of it, or no-issues of it, left to Higher Powers, *whose* eye commands Immensity and Eternity, and can judge of such matters. For me, as good Luther said, *Hier steh' ich, ich kann nicht anders; Gott hilf mir! Amen!*—To a less candid man, all this would of necessity require modifications enough; but you, in your clear just way, will not accuse me of running out blindfold, knocking down passengers, and breaking my own head against posts or “Paddington Omnibi”; and will supply all that is wanted. Fundamentally it is an image of my Creed in that matter.

Shame on me for so much beating of the wind, when I meant to walk the firm Earth, and be exclusively autobiographical! One of my reasons for wishing you here, tho' among the smallest, is a sort of wish to question you about Paris, in its practical, economical and all other aspects: we have a kind of purpose to see it, to settle in it for a while (say next year), and see Books and Men there. France is the great scene of Practice; man is or has been actually thrown bare there; has burst his withe-manacles in some measure; and demonically or angelically works and demeans himself like a very Samson. All that, to a nearly exclusive lover of Realities, were well worth seeing, worth laying to heart. John returns to Italy in little more than a month; a new engagement for two years. Till after his expected return, at least *not* at present, I form no settled resolution: this place, with a little company so very pleasant, does ill, very ill for me, without it; I must struggle to exchange it—yet for a better. Meanwhile spiritually too I told you I was at a kind of pause, or crisis; by God's blessing too I have no instant need to write aught in that humour; so I sit pretty quietly till the chaos lay itself, and the new *road* (for road there is for one in *every* case) grow plainer a little.—

Teufelsdröckh, under the as whimsical title of *Sartor Resartus*, is to come out piecemeal in *Fraser's Magazine* : I am heartily glad to get my hands washed of the thing ; which I now look upon not without a tincture of abhorrence : nevertheless what is written may stand written ; I did it as I could. You shall have a copy, and any friends of yours you may think it will profit. A half-mad production of mine¹ (with some attempt of half-method in it) you may see in this July and in the August Number of that too blackguard Periodical ; wherein, however, there breathes a kind of mad morbid Life, perhaps a shade less hateful to one than the calm dry bones that *smile* on you their Death's-head smile in most others. Alas, alas ! that one cannot spurn both and all of them down far enough—to the Devil almost ; and go on far apart from them ! Patience, however.

Now write your longest perfectly biographical and Autobiographical Letter ; no, not perfectly so ; but any way yourself like it, not forgetting these elements. Who is Grote, my frequent benefactor ? I mean rather *what* is he spiritually and individually ; for I know him to be a Banker, and a man of character, and see occasionally that he is a man of talent and decision. Is Miss Martineau gone ? Fonblanque, Buller, Fox, Junius, the Tories, Radicals, Whigs even, all the world is interesting to me.—God bless you !

T. CARLYLE.

[P.S. by Mrs. Carlyle.] My kind remembrances—as usual left out. You *must* come.

¹ "Count Cagliostro," which was published in *Fraser's Magazine*, Nos. 43 and 44 (July and August 1833). See *Miscellanies*, vol. iv.

LETTER 13

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,

10th September, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

Instead of a Letter you here as sometimes formerly get the mere sham of a Letter ; a kind of decoy to induce you to write in return for it. Why I have not sooner replied to your last were long to tell. I have *spoken* more than usual in that interval ; yet inwardly was rarely more *silent*, or had more need of silence. Besides I almost daily expected to have your arrival announced as at hand. This afternoon there can be but one measured half-hour yours, and that the stupidest of the day. We are very unfortunate.

John tells me you are not coming ! Thus does the long outlook of two twelvemonths prove to be no Castle of Pleasance, but a mere Air-castle, and vanishes when you lift the knocker ! Alas, it is like so much else in this weary Land of Shadows. Our regret I can well assure you is real : but what can we do ? Wander on ; and see what the next piece of road will yield us. Or is there not still some possibility ? It were unfriendly to urge you, if your necessity calls the other way : neither do I ; beyond what you see. For one thing, in any case, be more and more diligent in writing ; that London and you be still kept in some measure present to me. No Letters, I feel, can be more *authentic* than yours ; there are few relations with any man that could be freer from *harm* than this with you. Let us do what we can. Another day will bring us together again face to face, I hope, in a much improved condition. ❧

For many years (seven, I think) the Pen has not been so long out of my hand as even now. A multitude of

things required and require adjustment in me : it was a great kindness in my destiny too that precisely at this period I could pause without economical inconvenience ; the first time I have had any inward wish to pause. I feel sometimes that I am not idle, tho' unemployed to the eye. We shall see what will come of it. In some week or two, however, I shall probably be again at my Desk ; according to my old maxim that one should not puzzle, should not speculate ; but having got even a little light, go instantly to *work* with it, that it may become *more*. I have a general feeling growing of late years that " I am all in the wrong " ; and, by the Devil's malice, shall always have it, for we live in a Dualistic world. Strange how in ourselves, as in all earthly things, a little nucleus of Truth and Good rolls itself on in a huge comet-like environment of Error and Delusion ; and yet at length in some degree the Error and Delusion evaporate and vanish (as Nonentities, mere Negations) and the fraction of Good is *found* to be a Reality !

" What shall I teach thee, the foremost thing ? "

Couldst teach me off *my own Shadow* to spring !

In Heaven, I suppose, we shall have no Shadow ; but here, on this Earth, thro' soul and thro' body it goes chasing you at the frightfullest rate.

Emerson, your Presentee¹, rolled up hither, one still Sunday afternoon while we sat at dinner. A most gentle, recommendable, amiable, whole-hearted man ; whom we thank for one of the pleasantest interruptions to our solitude. He staid with us four-and-twenty hours ; and was thro' the whole Encyclopedia with us in that time. A good " Socinian " understanding, the clearest heart ; above all, what I loved in the man was his health, his unity with himself ; all people and all things seemed

¹ Mill had given Emerson a letter of introduction to Carlyle, which was presented in person on August 25th.

to find their quite peaceable adjustment with him, not a proud domineering one, as after doubtful *contest*, but a spontaneous-looking, peaceable, even humble one. I should henceforth learn to see, or see better, that Unitarians are not hollow men, but at worst limited men, and otherwise of the fairest conditions. Their very need of a religion, strongly evinced in that creed of theirs, should recommend them. One seems to believe almost all that they believe ; and when they stop short and call it a Religion, and you pass on, and call it only a reminiscence of one, should you not part with the kiss of peace ?

Of Gustave [d'Eichthal] this good Emerson could tell me almost nothing, except that he was at Naples, with seemingly an uncertain aim before him if any. I feel much interest in poor Gustave : of all the Saint-Simonians *he* probably was the truest, his disappointment will be the deepest. Bring me home news of him, if possible ; convey to him also my friendliest wishes, if you have opportunity.

John hints briefly that you are for Paris. A *different* destination from the hitherward one ! I shall have a thousand questions to ask ; or rather to wish to ask, for most of them will remain *unasked*. Investigate for me, report to me all that interests yourself most : it is sure of interesting me too. The " Literature of Despair " is indeed a desperate one for the present ; perhaps also the " Conduct of Despair " : yet both *will* have their fruit. In the latter at least there is an energy and greatness, which if it spring *from* Despair, *points* quite elsewhither. You will also bring some Books ? Especially more *Mémoires* ! That *Cent-et-un* I read some volumes of, and beyond the palpablest " Despair " found little in. But facts ! Things that *were* done and endured by men of like passions with ourselves ! These are the pabulum one never tires of.

Thank you for your sketch of Grote. I know nothing of the Lawyer you mention but the name. Send me him too if you like, and all persons of any self-subsistency. These are the men I could long to see bodily and commune with : let me at least see them in your Letters, as thro' a glass darkly. Furthermore do not give me the Intellect alone, or nearly alone, but with it the Temper, Humour, even the Trade and looks. *Alles Menschliche* has value for me : I am a most voracious fellow.

Perhaps there will be a Letter from you tomorrow ? I shall see from it who is to write again.

My Wife is at Moffat, a watering-place in the East of this County ; she is with her Mother and Cousin there for a week, and I the loneliest man your very imagination could figure. I literally do not speak five words a-day. A "Scotch Brownie" of a servant silently provides for me all that I want and more ; there is no human being that I have anything to say to. A singular existence ! Not without a kind of charm ; but happily not to *last*. *Gehab' Dich wohl !*

T. CARLYLE.

Benevolent Brownie entered with Tea ; a silent but peremptory token that the moment had come !

I have read the Poor-Laws Book ; and a wonderful thing it is.—Wait till *next* time !

LETTER 14

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,

24th September, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

Our Letters met each other (and passed without recognition) at Dumfries. As mine professed

only to be the semblance of a Letter, it seems fit that I first write again. Perhaps you will have time to answer me still before leaving England : in any case you will think of me the better in France, and feel yourself in my debt.

No hope now remaining of your presence here this Autumn, we must even give it up, like so much else ; and try to create a new one. Blessings on the "good time coming" ! Were it not for the future tense, the past and present would lose half their value ; the TIME-WORD (*Anglice*, VERB) were all too incomplete in this world. One of my chief anticipations from your visit was that we might, in reality, get better acquainted here : we are so like two spirits to one another, two Thinking-machines. Let us hold by that, however, and study to extend it, till we get more. If I had shown you my book-presses here, my refectories, dormitories, even stalls and coal-houses, my whole terrestrial clay-environment, you would have seen me infinitely better, and loved me more, felt more authorized to love me. But, as the Philosophers say, "What good is it ?" Let us do the best we can.

I received your Books last Wednesday, together with a great Packet from my Brother. The little Paper on *Alison* was the first thing I fell upon ; a thing I read carefully and even twice. There is not a word in it that I do not subscribe to : it is really a *decided* little utterance, with a quiet emphasis, a conscious incontrovertibility, which (heretic that I am) I rejoice to see growing in you. Such a feeling, such a mode of writing seems to me, in these days especially, the only fruitful one : emphasis in uttering, what is it but the natural result of entireness in believing ; the *first* condition of all worth in words spoken, and quite especially precious in a despicable sceptical, "supposing," weathercock, foundationless era such a sours ? Give me, above and before all

things, a man that has legs to stand on : keep far from me, were it possible, the innumerable decrepit *culs-de-jatte*, that can stand, that can move nowhere, but only beg permission of all bystanders to move *whithersoever they are shoved* ! You perceive, therefore, I set little store by this so celebrated virtue of Tolerance : alas, I cannot say that I have almost ever seen such a virtue ; only seen, often enough and with ever-increasing dislike, Indifferentism parading itself in the stolen garments of it. “ I came not into the world to bring peace, but a sword ” ! Such is in perhaps all cases part of the stern mission which a good man feels laid on him. How different, above all, is that honey-mouthed, tear-stained, soup-kitchen Jesus Christ of our poor shovel-hatted modern Christians from the stern-visaged Christ of the Gospels, proclaiming aloud in the market-place (with such a total contempt of the social respectabilities) : “ *Woe* unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, *hypocrites* ” ! Descend from your Gigs, ye wretched scoundrels, for the hour is come !—

As for this business of the French Revolution I think you ought to determine on setting forth your ideas and acquisitions in regard to it at more length than you have ever yet done ; and that by your first opportunity, with your best deliberation. It is properly the grand *work* of our era (a most sorrowful, barren and unfruitful work, yet still the work which was laid on us, which we have done and are doing) : in this, in the right understanding of this, is involved all possible knowledge important for us ; and yet at the present hour our ignorance of it in England is probably as bad as total (for Error is infinitely worse than Ignorance) ; and in France itself knowledge seems only just beginning. *Understand* me all those sectionary tumults, convention-harangues, guillotine-holocausts, Brunswick discomfitures ; exhaust me the meaning of it ! You *cannot* ; for it is a flaming

Reality; the depths of Eternity look through the *chinks* of that so *convulsed* section of Time ;—as through *all* sections of Time, only to dull eyes not so visibly. To me, it often seems, as if the right *History* (that impossible thing I mean by History) of the French Revolution were the grand Poem of our Time ; as if the man who *could* write the *truth* of that, were worth all other writers and singers. If I were spared alive myself, and had means, why might not I too prepare the way for such a thing ? I assure you the attempt often seems among my possibilities. The attempt *can* be made ; cannot, by the highest talent and effort, be succeeded in, except in more or less feeble approximation. But indeed is not all our success approximate only ? In any case I continue thoroughly interested in the subject, and greedily collect whatever knowledge I can get of it. That *Thiers*, these *Mémoires* of yours have done more for me than almost all else I had read ; you can hardly conceive with what a tumult of feelings, visions, half-visions, guesses and darknesses they wholly envelop me. Whatever more of such you have pray get me. I spent yesterday with *Madame Roland* ; a most remarkable woman ; one of the clearest, bravest, perhaps as you say *best* of her sex and country ; tho' (as indeed her time prescribed) almost rather a man than a woman. I prefer her, however, to De Staël, on several grounds : on this, were it on no other, that she utterly divests herself of *cant*, which the spiritual Amazon never could even resolutely try to do. But on the whole what a contrast are these two ! Of the other book-figures I think *Riouffe* dwells most with me ; he and the other Prison men, especially that little citizen Versifier, and his jaunty ways with the *Citoyennes* ; it was all to me like the grandest Drama I had ever assisted at.

But now in connection with these fine speculations let me tell you some little practical things I will have

you do for me at Paris. The first is to ascertain by comparison of me and that city how you imagine I could contrive to live there for a few months : I mean not only spiritually, socially, but economically, *crumenically*. What think you is the lowest sum for which a couple such as you know us could contrive to subsist there, so as (dismounting altogether from the *Gig*) to go on with fair chance in the way of intellectual investigation ? Are there furnished houses or huts to be had about any of the circumjacent villages, where you can keep your own servant ; and at what rate ? Should one find the French Notabilities (I mean Literary and Artistic—if indeed there *be* any such) accessible, communicative ? Libraries I know there are, not how available they are. The thing I want to understand is French Existence, French History, especially the recent portion of it : you can tell me what resources, from Books, from Men, from personal inspection I should find there more than elsewhere ; we shall then, weighing outlay with value to be anticipated, know better how it stands. Another thing I need, perhaps attainable enough : a good French Dictionary ! I have got old *Richelet* in two folios, very useful for my *Bayle* and whatever is earlier ; and then three or four wretched French-English ones, which daily in attempting to use them I feel inclined to burn. The Academy Dictionary is not of my sort ; a little Vocabulary of any sort that contained *all* kinds of words, vulgar and royal, and gave even the feeblest interpretation, were far better for me than your *Cruscan* (“sifting”) sort, for often the “siftings” are the very thing I am in quest of. You can probably name me a name here ; that I think is all I shall ask at present.

My sheet is turned the *worst* way already, and I am hardly begun writing ! That is the misery of Letters. I had much to tell you about my way of life here ; still an *inkless* one, still an unsettled one.

My last Letter was written in the extremity of solitude ; I write now from a house full of the wretchedest company,¹—whom I have left drinking in another room : God help them ! I have many projects for the winter, and hope not to waste it, perhaps least of all if it prove a silent one ; which however is not likely. Poor Glen is still in the Glasgow Asylum, one of the *many broken promises* one sees and sighs over. Another of them is at the bottle and glass here close by me. Alas ! alas !—Glen's brother was here last week, and we had much counsel about the poor fellow ; of whom I have not given up hope : we made a sort of plan you will hear of by and by.

John, I fancy, is by this time at Frankfort, journeying up the Rhine ; not to rest till Lausanne or even Milan. I am glad you like him, and prepare to know him : may it prove for good to both ! He is a man of perhaps naturally sceptical intellect, but who has (with great agony) *burnt* the scepticism out of him, and now stands assured of several things, on a basis that neither man nor Devil can push him from : a thoroughly *honest* man, with much talent yet undeveloped in him ; a broad laughter-loving fellow, yet of deepest earnestness ; with an inexhaustible fund of affection and massive *bonhomie* ; love him as well as you can *without fear*. Of you he thinks all that is good and handsome ; only that perhaps "too logical" is your excess. If so, reduce it by strengthening the *antagonist muscle*. You understand that ; and it means, in human culture a great deal. *Weaken* nothing ; strengthen the opposite of what is too strong.

You surprise me greatly by liking *Cagliostro* ; as indeed your likings and dislikings in these cases have shown me more than once how little I yet understand you. As it is the rarest of all things to get any fraction of sincere criticism I feel always much gratified with your approval ; heartily thankful for

¹ Of sportsmen come for the grouse shooting.

your so kindly expressed censure ; that too I know still better to be genuine. You are right about my style ; your interrogatory is right.¹ I think often of the matter myself ; and *see* only that I cannot yet see. Irony is a sharp instrument ; but ill to handle without cutting *yourself*. I cannot justify, yet can too well explain what sets me so often on it of late : it is my singularly anomalous position to the world,—and, if you will, my own singularly unreasonable temper. I never know or can even guess what or who my audience is, or whether I have any audience : thus too naturally I adjust myself on the Devil-may-care principle. Besides I have under all my gloom a genuine feeling of the ludicrous ; and could have been the merriest of men, *had I not* been the sickliest and saddest. Thus stands it : but I tell you I will mend ; and what more can man do ?

Now I beg of you write with all *abandonment* ; with all copiousness as to your elder Brother, not caring what you write. And so blessings be with you ! My good Dame (from amid her visitorial Tophet)² joins truly in the prayer.

Ever faithfully,
T. CARLYLE.

I have forgot twice to say I should like *Coningsby* and Bulwer's *England* ; and indeed *anything* almost or altogether that you like. Bulwer is an honest kind of creature, tho' none of the strongest ; nay perhaps, as you once said, "distinguished most for his tenuity."

The Poor-law Commission stands on the *rich* side of the question, and looks at the poor as *things*, who nevertheless are men too. For the rest it is well done ; Chadwick's part far the best : and *such*

¹ Mill had asked Carlyle if he thought his way of writing, for example in *Sartor* and in *Cagliostro*, partly in sarcasm or irony, and partly in earnest, deserved such honour as his frequent use of it implied.

² Mrs. Carlyle by her presence had graced the company of "Gunner bodies," who appear to have tarried very long over the wine bottle !

a spectacle of baseness, wretchedness, dishonesty ; wherein perhaps only this light-gleam (a most *electric* one) shines on us that now at last, both Magistrate and Government seem heartily *afraid* of the poor ; quite *heartily* afraid. God help them and us.

Remember us affectionately to the Austins ; in whose good-fortune we sincerely rejoice.

LETTER 15

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,
28th October, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

If this Letter reach you in Paris, it will deserve to be considered as one of the triumphs of human art ; a bringing together of what we may call the opposite ends of the world. No two positions, no two manners of existence, could be more different than yours and mine, at this hour. I sit here in the middle of moors, of leafless or red-leaved trees, in the blustering of winds and desolate rain ; in the completest isolation ; conversing only (thro' heaps of Books) with the absent or the dead ; nothing alive in my environment but myself and my coal fire. While you— ! But I will not try to picture out your situation in that crackling, sparkling, never-resting chaos ; where nevertheless you shall hear my voice, and hold fellowship with me : such feats can five fingers and the four-and-twenty Alphabetic letters do.

Should I tell you all I have to say, whole reams of paper would not hold it ; how then shall a miserable scrap of a single sheet ! The Pen too so ill represents the thousand-voiced Thought ; which I could not even *speak* with the smallest completeness ; for it is true what Goethe teaches, and every day I feel it truer : “ The first *word* we utter we begin to *err*.” *Ach*

Gott! But I will keep all that *silent* (the depth and greatness of Silence also should be known to me); and abide mainly by matters of business; the articulation of which, even in a sheet, is easy. Your patience, I know, is great, and I apply again without apology.

Some two weeks ago I determined, by way of practising myself in Narrative, to write a small historico-poetic Piece on the famous *Diamond Necklace*. Foreign Quarterly Cochrane declines having anything to do with it; I persist all the more freely for this: and now you will answer me, or get me answered where you are, a question or two:—Is it known to anybody, Who wrote those Memoirs of Lamotte? There is first one thin volume (1789); then two thicker (1790 perhaps, but they are not here); all three are more like the screeching of some plundered rookery than the utterance of an articulate-speaking mortal; falser they seem than any book I ever read. Orléans is by some said to have been at the bottom of them: was there any truth in this? Lamotte interests me as an original; zoologists must dissect even rattlesnakes: but look as I will, she shows all too dim thro' that confusion. It were something if I knew that *she* wrote those lies, and under what circumstances. Next (when you get back to London), do you know what house it was, what street it was, she alighted *from* and *on*, in that last fall of hers? The Book says "near the Temple of Flora"; which I never heard of. Again, what became of her Count; did he perish in those "Horrors of the French Revolution"? Was Oliva ever heard of again? It seems Villette was still alive in Paris, in 1826; by oversight of the Devil, he may be there yet?—Abbé Georgel and Madame Campan are both thought to be *true*, with the bias natural to each. Nay, if you can learn it easily, tell me even in what street Boehmer and Bassange lived; whether any trace of them yet lingers *sub luna*.—Some of these questions will make you

smile : nevertheless, small as the objects are, they would help me to *locate* my little story, and be worth the paper they cost. I would ask a hundred such questions about a hundred things, were I in Paris beside you. For the rest, do not *plague* yourself about these ; do not seek far after them, or spend much room in answering them.

This Necklace affair has wasted so much of my sheet, I must repress a multitude of others. One that still claims mention is of the commercial sort ; for there is no end to your variety of functions as my Factotum ! It is to buy me for a franc or two some map, about a foot square, of the environs of Paris. Is there such a thing ? A map of the Department *Seine et Oise*, still better of the old Province *Ile-de-France*, would be of real use to me. Perhaps you can procure it. Rolled round a piece of wood, or spread out in some book, it could come to me by Fraser's Parcel. Also, can you get me, cheap, a Hénault's *Abrégé chronologique* ? I have a duodecimo copy here, a borrowed one, of 1765 ; a very humble-looking Book, such as might sell for a few shillings : I should like well to possess a similar one. It is one of the worthiest books I know ; were there such another, of England, I would gladly exchange my whole historical library for it (lingering only over *Hume*), were there as many *Hallams* as a horse could carry. Lastly, if you can get any such thing as some little supplementary *Dictionnaire Néologique* in any shape, pray bring it. I give you leave to spend a sovereign for me, on these three things ; but *not* to harass yourself searching for them ; the map, too, observe, is the only one I have really much *need* of. And now, take breath ; for my commissions, this time, are done. Henceforth I do nothing but *illudere chartis*, while there is paper left.

I recognised your criticism of the poor Whig Ministry, almost at the second sentence. You are

sharp enough upon the poor mongrels ; but how be otherwise, if one is to speak of them at all ? Perhaps there were intrinsically few functions ever baser than the one they have, with their talent, in their place, at this hour to fill. Whigs nevertheless are necessary, tho' daily growing a viler necessity ; intolerable to gods, men and columns. Unbelieving mediocrity, barren, dead and death-giving, speaks itself forth more and more in all they do and dream. The true Atheist in these days is the Whig ; he worships and can worship nothing but Respectability ; and this he *knows*, unhappy man, to be—nothing but a two-wheeled vehicle ! The Tory is an Idolater ; the Radical a wild heathen Iconoclast : yet neither of them strictly is “ without God in the world ” : the one has an *infinite* hope, the other an infinite remembrance ; both *may* be men and not gigmen. Lord, pity the poor necessary Whigs, then ; as for me, the less I say or think of them the better. In last *Examiner* I recognised (before the “A.B.”) another piece on “ Commissions ” ; which also, as the Germans say, I could heartily *gelten lassen*. Your new thoughts on Art shall be still more welcome to me : “ it is right that on *all* hands one shoot out radii, till the circumference rebound him ” ; the “ circumference ” is thus at once filled and widened. Your Morpeth Philosopher “ with spectacles and no eyes ” (poor fellow) is a Hatter, I think : Sir W. Hamilton once spoke of him last winter, but without criticism. By the bye, let me here mention that Sir William was *not* the “ old schoolman ” I once spoke of ; that *Redivivus* was another considerably inferior character, whom I twice for some mortal hours exchanged small logic-shot with ; a *ganz ausgestorbener Mann*. He lectured on Logic, and thought Logic was to be the salvation of the world.

Best of all do I sympathize with you in regard to the New Testament. Every word I say is spoken

out of my heart. Great, soul-inspiring, unfathomable in significance, is that poor artless Biography by Saint Matthew ! Of all *Antigignmen* too, in any time, in any place, the greatest is that divine Hero of St. Matthew. A thousand times have his words, even thro' all *these* impediments, brought life and hope back into my heart : I have wept warm tears, as I thought of *him* ; and how the voice of his Glad Tidings (the *gladdest* of all ; for it was of man's indefeasible divineness) had gone forth to all lands, had reached even the English land and me. "*Be of good cheer ! I have overcome the world*" : *I* !—if you consider that, and who the *I* was, a whole Gospel lies in it.—St. John I regard with you as a kind of *didactic* Biographer, less taken up with his hero than with what he fancies to be his hero's philosophy ; of far inferior value therefore ; less artless, perhaps one might say less sincere. On the whole, it is the thorough *heartiness*, the intense and entire *sincerity* of the Bible, that makes it still the Book of Books. In no other Book is there the same quality in such a degree ; some touches of it (under circumstances strangely new) I meet with in Goethe, almost alone of the moderns. I advise you to persevere in reading the Bible (in *seeing* it, through all distances and disguises) : that here too you have discarded *Dilettantism*, and can earnestly look at the Earnest, this is a new pleasure to me.

As for myself, not having "a ream of paper," how shall I explain what passes with me ? I feel in general that I am at the end of an epoch, for good or for ill ; if these disquietudes were but "growth-pains," how gladly should I bear them ! All barriers seem *overthrown* in my inward world ; nothing is to *prevent*, to deter me, but also nothing to *direct*. I pause over a boundless, *unpeopled* prospect ; ask how I am to walk and work there ; *nehm' mich zusammen*. One of the questions that oftenest presents

itself is, *How* Ideals do and *ought to* adjust themselves with the Actual? A vast question, as I take it up. On which ground our John Knox and Scottish Kirk is so peculiarly significant for me. A *genuine* Ideal, that did subsist, in spite of men and devils, with Life in it, for a hundred and fifty years! On the same ground too, my value for the Actual (in all senses), for what *has realised* itself continues and increases: and often I ask myself, is not all Poetry the essence of Reality (could one but get at such essence), and true History the only possible Epic? What limits my affirmative answer should have, are yet nowise clear.

If to all these internal fermentations you add one's strangely anomalous external position, you have confusion enough. My whole trade is to think and *speak*; but as the world goes, I have absolutely no permission to speak! Think of poor *me* and poor *Fraser's Magazine*! Yet such is my *best* speaking-mechanism at this moment; for aught I know, it is my only one. With the Reviews I think I have nigh done, or am fast getting done; and as to Books, what Book I could at this moment write and be paid for (be "furnished with meat and tools" for), nay could even get rid of if I had it written,—is quite a problem to me. Bookselling even Effingham Wilson finds to be about *dead*—of Puffery. I do not think *it* will ever revive; nor perhaps aught satisfactory instead of it for some generations. Me (by God's blessing) the death of it cannot kill; yet it can confuse me, and give me pause. He who has a tongue and has anything that he *knows*, cannot be kept silent. I think of various things; some of them you shall counsel me in by and by. Meanwhile what a blessing that I can sit here, not *forced* to speak, for months yet; till the Inward has grown clear; to which the Outward (were it of adamant) *must* give issue! Nay one of the best things that has befallen me for years occurs this very winter. A not inconsiderable

Library in these parts, collected by a virtuoso deceased now, is given up to my pleasure ; I actually this winter have a free command of Books.¹ Once in the three weeks I drive over, and return loaded. Figure me then, say only ten hours a day, with the fiercest appetite ; forgetful of all but the thing read of ! In this way shall I *top-dress* my poor understanding with the wonderfulest compost ; much need it had of some : thus writing or not writing I can expect a winter much happier, much profitabler than many have been.—On all this you shall hear enough in future ; you have heard more than enough (I fear) at present. The remedy is, write again soon ! If you have time in Paris, well ; if not, when *first* you have time.

Vale mei memor.

Ever yours truly,

T. CARLYLE.

My Wife has read *Roland* with hardly less admiration than myself. That request of Madame's on the way to the guillotine, "for pen and paper that she might write the strange thoughts she had"—kindles me for her, helps her with me very greatly. For her grand-fault was being too *conscious* ; too much of a reasoner, too little of a prophetess (one must put up with these words) ; but on the verge of Time, she too looks into the Eternal, one can fancy her too inspired. This was my "woman man" ;² in which, for the rest, I agree with your correction.

¹ The keys of a fine library in a country house, Barjarg, a few miles from Craigenputtock, had been kindly lent to Carlyle by its owner, Mr. Hunter Arundell.

² In Letter 14, *ante*, Carlyle had concluded his eulogy of Madame Roland with the qualification that she was, "as indeed her time prescribed, almost rather a man than a woman." Mill, though quite agreeing with all he thought Carlyle really *meant*, took exception to the phraseology, holding that there was no distinction to be made between the highest masculine and the highest feminine character ; and suspecting that it was only the second-rate people of the two sexes that were unlike.

Is Charles Lacretelle still extant? I have read his Histories; their name is *Superficies*.—Forget not the d'Eichthals; also where is the Père?

LETTER 16

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,
17th December, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

On Wednesday gone a fortnight I said to myself, "there will be a Letter from Mill tonight"; neither was I disappointed. Wednesday evening brought Tea, and our draggled Postboy from Dumfries, with a whole bag of Letters, and the best of the whole from the Correspondent in question. Many thanks for your long close-written close-meditated Answer to all my queries! It is the best account of Paris I ever saw in equal bulk; contained as much as some Colburns would have been glad of, to beat out into three volumes.

My wish decidedly were to go and see Paris with my own eyes; my purpose also, in all but one too probable contingency: The want of Money not needed for other more pressing objects. We shall see how matters turn. Alas, unless one go soon, the actors and spectators in those Tragedies will all have withdrawn, and one great interest of such a visit be past forever. That Necklace Baron, for example, what would I not give to have the questioning of him for one solar day! The "dignity of History" has buckramed up poor History into a dead mummy. There are a thousand purposes which History should serve beyond "teaching by Experience": it is an address (literally out of Heaven, for did not God order it all?) to our *whole* inner man; to every faculty of Head and Heart, from the deepest to the slightest:

there is no end to its purposes ; none to one's amazement, contemplation, over it. Now for *all* such purposes, high, low, ephemeral, eternal, the first indispensable condition of conditions, is that we *see* the things transacted, and picture them out wholly as if they stood before our eyes ;—and this, alas, of all considerations, is the one that “dignity of History” least thinks of. You must manage this by many indirect methods for yourself in your own person.

The actual Paris, from your account of it which confirms all that I gather elsewhere, seems (if we except its *restlessness*, which is no sublimity of the highest kind) to wear but a trivial aspect : a singular deficiency of great thoughts, great actions, great men. The merit of it, beyond England, appears to be mainly its *abandon* : it *is* a real existence of men, not hampered, distorted, falsified at every step by side-feelings of responsibilities and respectabilities : this however is an immense merit,—for the spectator at any rate. But, on the whole, the French character puzzles me more and more. There never seems to have been in it generally any *moral* basis, in our sense of the word (which I take to be a Puritanical, to be therefore an Old-Hebrew one, and of the greatest worth and depth), but rather a quick graceful sensuousness (*Sinnlichkeit*), wherefrom naturally enough Honour, Gallantry, a light joyous way of life originated ; and in later times also, September-work and enough else. In reading many French books, and even books of genius, I find this a necessary key to much. The authors seem to get along, in the strangest manner, quite comfortably without any *Conscience* at all, or ever feeling the want of one ; taking the Given world as it is given ; and getting many a sapid little mess of victuals from it, come whence it may. At bottom, a *Pagan* kind of being, yet not without its significance.—And now as to this *Litteratur der*

Verzweiflung, is it not really a Desperate Literature, yet with a Desperation of the flimsiest sort? Nothing struck me more in the *Livre des Cent-et-un*: a Small beer run sour! Everybody in the most indignant opposition—to Providence; and not so much as a good Faust's Curse comes of it. They eat their victuals there, with a *sacre-ing* between the teeth (at the bad cookery), and live uselessly, and die as the fool dieth.

- Your Pictures of Carrel and Cavaignac indicate at least a more emphatic species of man. I had seen Cavaignac's Pleading (in the French *Globe*); but nothing that led me to prophesy a character such as his present one. There is much in it you must respect: his very Atheism is a better Theism than that of Shovelhat-dom; the wretchedest *dish-washings* (literally, if you will think of it; from the Christian and Pagan *dishes*, that had once food in them) anywhere to be met with, at present, perhaps in the whole world. For the rest, I cannot without a very deep commiseration, behold an earnest truth-loving man driven, by perversities environing him, into this saddest of counter-perversities: the denial that Man or the World has any Father but Death. Sad enough, to "look upwards for the Divine *Eye*, and see nothing but the empty black glaring bottomless Death's *Eye-socket*!" However it is his business not ours. Whoever recognizes the infinite nature of Duty believes in a God, against his own consciousness: *our* feeling towards his Atheism is dissent and sympathy, nothing more. In almost all the rest that Cavaignac teaches, I go, a greater or a shorter way, heartily along with him. Carrel and his well-whiskered Coadjutors stand out in lively relief before me: one almost regrets to see such a man a Journalist merely: his voice might reach farther than the day; yet perhaps the day has need of him, and all voices (the most prophetic ever heard) reach only to *some* day.

True also that recognized or not, *no* thing a man ever did can be annihilated ; it lives onwards, into Eternity, and even (as our Fathers well knew) through Eternity.

One other characteristic that strikes me much in your Description, and much in many other quarters, is this strange universal hubbub the French are all making (and most of us make) about the "good of the species," and such like. How each man seems to mind all men's business,—and leave his own to mind itself ! *Something* is to be done ; but not for Me or for Thee ; no, for Mankind,—when I and Thou are quite past helping. What would all manner of Socinian Preachers think of me, if I confessed, as I do now to you with little misgiving (or at worst appealing to your future self) that this manner of existence is to me almost as good as altogether foreign ! Nay, I cannot find that it ever entered for much into the head of any *real benefactor* of Mankind (as he proved to be) : his guidance and purpose lay much nearer home ; the working out of what was best and purest *in himself* : in *this* lay for him all the Law and the Prophets. The good of the species (a thing infinitely too deep for my comprehending) I leave, with the most perfect trust, to God Almighty the All-governing who does comprehend it ; believing withal (when I do consider Causes and Effects—which is as rarely as possible) that no good thing I can perform, or make myself capable of performing, *can* be lost to my Brothers, but will prove in reality all and the utmost that I was capable of doing for them.—Now what think you of this Creed, my dear Friend ? It is a point which I have long seen we differed in ; but seen also, and with great pleasure, that we were approximating in. If you still differ from me, even with vehemence, I will not take it ill : in the calmest manner, as above said, I will appeal to the future John Mill, and he shall decide between

us. The present John is no common Radical, but a most uncommon one, and daily growing more uncommon—onwards as I fancy to “speculative radicalism of the darkest tinge,” and also of some other.—In sober truth, I cannot so much as imagine any peace or solid foundation of improvement in human things till this universal scheme of procedure go out of men’s heads again, and each take to what alone is practicable for himself, mending of his own ways ; —wherfrom Benevolence enough, and infinitely better things, will be sure enough to result. Since you have read the *New Testament*, and understood it *anew*, I tell you all this, with the greater freedom. It seems to me, Jesus of Nazareth was of all men the least of a “Penny Lady,”¹ or comprehensive universal Soup-Kitchen character : he pitied sorrow and sin and pain, with an infinite, outbursting, helpful pity, wheresoever he met with it ; but so likewise did he smite with an infinite withering indignation whatsoever deserved that ; and on the whole went about with a quite other object than consciously *seeking* either of these. “To do the will of my Father,”—were it even that of being scourged out of existence, as a failure and nonentity, and disgrace to the world.—

But here surely is too much of dissertation. You have a long arrear of London business to bring up with me ; pray do not delay with it. I write a line to Buller along with this ; but hardly imagine he will answer soon : my best almost sole dependence is you. I have not seen his *Mirabeau* yet ;² much to my dissatisfaction ; from some delay in Booksellers.—You never tell me anything of Roebuck now : I remember once saying that he reminded me of

¹ In Scotland the “Penny Ladies” (extraneously so-called) were busy “benevolent” persons ; subscribers of a penny a week for educating, etc., etc., not with much success.—T. C.

² Charles Buller’s article on *Mirabeau* was published in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, November 1833.

Robespierre,¹ and I could not take to him: this is not to hinder my feeling a true interest in what a true man (lean tho' he be) does, and grows to. I will even ask you to let me see him, when I return to London.—Hayward, writing about his *Faust*, surprises me with something about difficulties in the way of the *Examiner*, and the necessity for pecuniary help, and: Whether any lies within my sphere? I will at least *do no ill*; by altogether holding my tongue about it. There is not out of Edinburgh a single man known to me, that were worth applying to. This fact of the *Examiner's* distress (if it be a fact) seems to me the most scandalous symptom *yet* of our literary taste. But from your silence about it, perhaps it is no fact, or an exaggerated one.

No Books have yet come; but I expect Books tomorrow, and perhaps certain of yours may be among them. Have you *Beaumarchais'* Writings; his *Figaro*; his Gozman *Mémoires*? I shall be much obliged to Adolphe for anything about the *Collier*: that Old Baron's paper was very interesting to me; I figured him the most close-shaven distinct old man; driving out, in comfortablest apparel and hair powder; not without a touch of sub-acidity.—For the last month I have been very busy with a Paper on that same Necklace; which is now done, and truly a kind of curiosity in its way. I wanted to try whether by sticking actually to the Realities of the thing with as much tenacity and punctuality as the merest Hallam, one could not in a small way make a kind of Poem of it. The result is there: perhaps not quite so unsuccessful as one could have expected. I wish you had it to read it; for I have some thoughts of printing it as a little Book; and *without* advertisement at all (except perhaps *one* in the *Examiner*) sending it forth with my name on it to lie on, say, a hundred

¹ In Letter 9, *ante*, p. 49.

Booksellers' counters, and ask (without *any* Lying) whether anyone has aught to say to it. A good Bookseller, to make the sheets into bales, and send them off punctually, &c., &c., one at least that would not *steal*, were of the truest service in such a case : I fancy it will by and by be found to be the sole use of such.—We shall judge of it better, when it is farther gone from us, and the *dust of hewing it out* is laid.—In conclusion, or rather in *abruption* (for Paper and Time are done) I beg the most plentiful tidings from you ; and will myself write more *menschlich*, less *geistlich*, next time ;—and remain ever,

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

My Dame, as usual, sends all manner of kind regards ; for I think you are among her prime favourites : a great thing, I assure you, so strict is she in critical creed. She is walking about here in the boisterous December, hoping for Spring and the voice of singing.

Poor Glen is coming *hither* : we expect him to-night with his Brother ! Fancy such a meeting ; but it seemed needful. A more forsaken pair than these two perhaps breathes not.

Are you wearying for the *Madame Roland* (which seems not to be your own) ? say so, and I will despatch it.

LETTER 17

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,

24th December, 1833.

MY DEAR MILL,

This Note is not worth Twopence, or indeed half one penny : but I write it to remind you of me, and prevent a possible supererogation on your part ;

the more supererogatory, as you have so much of the necessary to do.

It strikes me that in the last Letter I mentioned *Beaumarchais' Works*. Now it so happens that next day, a complete copy of these arrived here ; and I have already satisfied myself about the *Mariage de Figaro*, and various other points ;—and you my beneficent purveyor, are discharged from all care on that head.

Will you tell Mrs. Austin that we received her two Notes ; that I have taken order about the Book, and will write, when I have read it.

Poor Glen has actually come ! It seems to me, in spite of superficial hallucinations, he is *far wiser* than when we used to see him in London. His mouth has lost that foolish undecided twist : he is very greatly calmer, manfuller, more distinct and resolved, in his general manner and bearing, than I ever saw him. He has come thro' what he calls the *peine forte et dure* (and hopes he is to grow the clearer for it)—in battling not with flesh and blood, but with his own Phantasms ; any way *in battling*. Strange are the ways of Destiny with us ! I hope, to poor Glen, it will one day prove all for good.

Wild winter is howling around ; but from time to time one snatches a glimpse of clear weather ; and remembers that the sun is not extinct, only gone into the other room. He will be back in spring : *reparaître en printemps*.

None of your Books have come ; nor indeed any Book from London, last month. I have taken order about it tonight.

That notice of the *Repository* was by you ? There is much in Fox that I wholly agree with ; or rather I agree with almost all in him, only do not rate it so highly as he.

The old Criticism on *Napier* happened to be carried away before I got it read. The article on Miss

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CARLYLE'S LETTERS TO

Martineau I did not recognise as yours ; tho' I remember feeling it to be wiser than much that I had read about her. But the truth is, so much mere babbling pro and con has taken place about poor Miss M. that, whenever I see her name, I feel a kind of temptation to skip. She is the most intelligible of women ; also the most measurable. There was the abominablest tirade against her in *Fraser* ; which you I suppose were happy enough not to see.

Reports are current here that Lord-Advocate Jeffrey is to be made a Scotch Judge. He himself says nothing of it.

Write soon. Next week ? I wish I could force you to write daily, without needing any answer.

Good night !

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 18

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,
20th January, 1834.

MY DEAR MILL,

Your first Letter did, as you conjecture, lie six days at Dumfries : I found it there, as I had gone down to meet my Mother, and bring her up hither on a visit to us ; there was another Letter from Rome too ; so that all good things came at once. You should have had an answer sooner, had you not half-predicted that you would write again "within a week." It so chanced that I was at Dumfries a second time last Saturday, and there found another belated Letter ; and so now on Monday night, close-shrouded from these howling winds and rains, I proceed to clear accounts with you.

The Book-parcel (I cannot yet speak in the plural number) had, in the meanwhile, arrived ; the *Morellet* one I mean : that of the *Collier*, Fraser tells me,

is still in his hands ; and he knows not well when it will come. He has altered his method of conveyance to Edinburgh, it seems, and now sends his Magazines by the Mail ; and so, for any foreign package, must *wait* a conveyance by sea, such being not regular but casual. What next are we to do ? I suppose Book-bales go off to Edinburgh almost weekly by sea ; but I can bethink me of none at this moment that are open to me. The shortest way I fancy in this and all similar cases will be to have the Parcel sent to Simpkins & Marshall, addressed " C/o Mr. M'Kie, Bookseller, Dumfries " : it will reach me sooner (about the end of every month), and cost only fivepence per pound, which rate is still an easy one. Will you therefore tell Fraser to take this method with it, if he have not an *early* prospect otherwise ; and also that his Edinburgh Agents have now faithfully sent me *all* the rest that is due. I am ashamed to trouble you so often on such matters : but what can I do ? The Necklace Collection is the very Book I enquired after over all Edinburgh, but with the most imperfect result ; and cannot fail to interest me. *Montgaillard* (not *Gaillard* ?) I have seen or heard of : *Bachaumont* was not to be got trace of in any Edinburgh Library, keenly as I searched for it. Have you ever seen it ? Have I any chance to see it ? Tell me at least where it begins and where it ends. Some Extracts from it that have come in my way are most lively gossip.—Another thing I wish you could investigate for me sometime ; yet not till I request you more specially : the manner of Countess de Lamotte's death. At the end of her *Second* Memoirs (the English Translation in two volumes) it is said she *fell* from the leads of a house, in such and such a street ; flying from some Bailiff : in all the French and other foreign accounts, it is said she was *thrown* out of a window in the course of a nocturnal carouse. The *Coroner's Inquest* that

must have been held on her were doubtless still accessible (for day and date are given), and would throw light on several things. In the British Museum, you shall look for it some time, if I fail elsewhere : but not till I tell you.

Your news of the projected Periodical¹ are of true interest for me : I only regret that I stand at such a distance, and can so inadequately understand what is purposed in the Enterprise ; with what means ; under what prognostics. It were so pleasant for me, so profitable, could I, seeing clearly what I did, *unite* myself with a set of men whom I believe to have the faithfullest intentions, and take a far heartier share in their work than (as you know) writing for it now and then means with me. Alas, we are fallen into wondrous times in that respect ! To enter some Dog's-meat Bazaar ; muffled up ; perhaps holding your nose, and say : " Here you, Master, able Editor or whatever your name is, will you buy this mess of mine (at so much per pound), and sell it among your Dog's-meat ? "—and then having dealt with the able Editor, hurry out again and wish that it could be kept secret from all men : *this* is the nature of my connection with Periodicals ; to this does the strange condition of the Book-trade, and my own unpropitious star at this time drive me : perhaps it will not be forever ; but even if forever I must be patient with it, and not act foolishly under it.

Already, as I meditate the matter, arises a considerable series of subjects which might be treated in that work of yours better than elsewhere. Two in particular, that have lain in me for years ; both of which might be handled with some effect, and made instructive even to the Radical world : I mean an

¹ The periodical was the short-lived *London Review*, founded by Molesworth and other rich Radicals and launched in 1835 : it was joined with the *Westminster* next year, and with it formed the *London and Westminster Review*.

Essay on Authors, and another *Essay on John Knox*.¹ The first of these, which I was thinking to write at any rate, I will cheerfully (on faith of *you*, for that is all I yet know of the Project) write for the new Work. The second is not so ready in me ; but can also be made ready. My further contributions must depend on the treatment I experience ; on the course matters take ; and I need not assure you, the closer my connexion can grow the better pleased shall I be.

For the present I can see but a little way. Have you not for instance a Radical Review already, the *Westminster* ; and Radical Magazines, *Tait's*, the *Repository* and so forth ? What, at bottom, is the meaning of a new Work of the same sort ; what newness is there to be in the doctrines of it ? Or is it mainly certain new *men* that find themselves more or less foreign in these Publications, and would rather be at home in one of their own ? Tell me, in any case, how the project shapes itself into fulfilment ; and when the First Number may be looked for, which perhaps will be the best answer of all. I approve greatly of your purpose to discard Cant and Falsehood of all kinds : yet there is a kind of Fiction which is not Falsehood, and has more effect in addressing men than many a Radical is aware of. This has struck me much of late years in considering *Blackwood* and *Fraser* ; both these are furnished as it were with a kind of theatrical costume, with orchestra and stage-lights, and thereby alone have a wonderful advantage ; perhaps almost their only advantage. For nothing was ever truer than this : *Ubi homines sunt modi sunt* ; a maxim which grows with me in significance the longer I meditate it ; modifying innumerable things in my Philosophy. The Radicals, as you may observe, appear universally *naked* (except so far as decency goes) ; and really

¹ The *Essay on Authors* was never written ; and that on *Knox* (under the title *Portraits of John Knox*) not until 1875.

have a most prosaic aspect. Barren, barren, as the Sahara sand, is that Speculation of theirs (as, for example, in *Tait*) ; almost more afflicting, only that it is *not* poisonous, than the putrid fermenting mud of *Fraser* !—The grand secret, I fancy, is that the Radicals as yet have almost *no genius* (tho' now not absolutely none) ; and so with prosaic *sense* and a vehement belief must do the best they can.

The sheet must not be all filled with facts ; otherwise there were much more to say. I wrote to Tait about Fonblanque's business ; enjoining *silence*, if nothing else could be looked for : it was all I could do ; and if Tait, " the centre of Edinburgh Radicalism," was not written to before, might be of some small effect. He was to communicate with you, in case of any success : I am not to hear from him till a week hence, when some of your Books are to be sent him, on their return to you, and then acknowledged by him. And so enough of facts tonight.

Your second Letter flatters me, and does more : I feel you much closer to me after it. Truly, my dear Mill, you are a most punctual, clear, authentic man. At several of your revelations, and computings whether you would stand lower with me or higher (but you rather thought lower), a smile came over me, in which lay a greater kindness than it were good to put in words. No, my Friend, you do not stand lower with me ; and I rather think you would stand higher still, were the whole known. As it is, I can say, the creed you write down is singularly like my own in most points,—with this single difference, that you are yet consciously nothing of a Mystic ; your very Mysticism (for there is enough of it in you) you have to translate into Logic before you give it place. Patience ! Patience ! Time will do wonders for us ; Time which, as the Germans say, brings roses—if there be a stem. Meanwhile I

earnestly commend your silence on that highest discrepancy¹ of ours ; for I do not think it is to be a perennial one. Nay if I were to *think* only in the dialect of Argument (as I see is yet mostly your habit) what other could I say than you? *Wer darf Ihn NENNEN?* "The Highest is not to be spoken of in words." All that of Natural Theology, and a Demiourgos sitting *outside* the world, and exhibiting "marks of design" is as deplorable to me as it is to you. Immortality also till of late years I never could so much as see the possibility of ; till now in some sense the certainty and philosophic necessity of it became manifest. And so I live in a kind of Christian Islam (which signifies "submission to God"), and say at all turns of Fortune, "God is great" and also "God is good," and know not aught else that I could say. For you also, if you *seek* it aright, doubt not, this great blessing is in store. "Walk *humbly* in well-doing" ; there is no other road for one. It is long years since I first saw the meaning of *Humility* (of *self-killing*, of *Entsagen*, as the Germans call it), and it came on me like water on one dying of thirst, and I felt it and still feel it to be the beginning of moral life. Unhappy that I am ! Could I keep that always in my eye, I too had "overcome the world." Courage then, let us hope all things, of ourselves and of each other ! And so Good night my dear Mill : write soon, very soon, again : you are about the reasonablest man I speak with at present. My Wife expressly "sends her love." Good night !

T. CARLYLE.

Poor Cavaignac ! There is a kind of gloomy Satanic Strength in him ; but he is *possessed* with

¹ Mill had written in his Letter of 12th January : "The first and principal of these differences is, that I have only . . . a merely probable God. . . . The unspeakable good it would be to me to have a *faith* like yours, I mean as firm as yours, on that to you fundamental point, I am strongly conscious of."

"revolution"; the curse of Ezekiel has fallen upon him, he is "made like unto a wheel." Absolutely a kind of frightful man: one feels that his notion of the Christian Superstition and of all the "airs from Heaven" that breathe in it, and indeed of all things related to it, is false as insanity, yet fixed as adamant; that *it* will fare with him as the Author of it did with Herod's men of war, who mocked him and spit on him!—But I will read that Preface again; for truly it is a sign of the times.

Beaumarchais is a lean, tough man, of wonderful adroitness: his Plays disappointed me the wrong way; his *Mémoires* the right way. Pity that there is no Life of him: a remarkable man. I have also read *Morellet*, a limited Whig kind of person, with a small Socratic vein; what we in Scotland call an eminently "canny" man. His Memoirs are worth reading; but are among the *less* worthy of it.

You did me the truest favour by that radical critique on me; for which I heartily thank you. If now or at any other time you have more of the sort to say, I beg you earnestly, say it!—T. C.

LETTER 19

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,

22nd February, 1834.

MY DEAR MILL,

Did you write last Monday, and again miss the Post? I had decided on hearing from you that day. It is true, you wrote, when I count it by the Almanac, not so long ago; but there is no sating of me in that matter. At the very lowest estimate of my demands (had one only to *demand* in this world, and not to *give* and *get*), you should sit down every Sunday instead of going to sermon, and fill me say

only three sheets with the cover ; which I could read on Wednesday night again by way of Practical sermon, having also failed to hear one at Church. But alas, as hinted, should not I then have to answer in the same ratio ?

You are to learn at present two little pieces of news. The first is that your Books, all that I had here, were sent off some two weeks ago to Tait of Edinburgh, whom I had previously requested to forward them. I have yet got no notice of receipt or progress from him ; but they must be in his hands since the time I mention, and may, we shall hope, reach you with his March Magazines. The Parcel was packed with my best skill, and directed in my clearest hand, "John S. Mill, India House, London" : it contained *Roland* (3), *Morellet* (2), *Paris Révolutionnaire*, *Bulwer*, *Coningsby* ; in short all that I had of yours, to my knowledge, except the *Repositories* : there was an *invoice* and no other writing. If I do not soon hear from Tait, or else that the Parcel is arrived, I will write to him : however there is little fear of such a confusion as we had in the Napier case ; Tait is a punctual character and used to such things.

Another piece of tidings is that Adolphe's Parcel arrived, and is already all read. The *Hénault* is a fine old Book, of the kind wanted ; there was no Departmental map, nor Dictionary ; the two Quartos on the *Diamond Necklace* contained much that was or will be of service : the Portraits all but two, and about a fourth part of the *Mémoires* were quite new to me. You must next tell me How much money I owe for all these valuables ? Thank Adolphe very heartily for his great and ready assiduity. *You* are not to be thanked, it would seem ; or may "thank yourself" —for getting so much trouble on your hands.

Within these last weeks several things have passed with me. I have been not a Candidate, yet a kind of enquiring Applicant for a public situation : what,

you will never guess. No other than that of Astronomical Observer and Professor in the City of Edinburgh ! It seemed to me a cold trade, yet a pure one ; one at which I could honestly work, were the very God of Flies to become dominant ; and my need of some craft to make bread by, when I look at the present posture of Author-craft, seems not inconsiderable. However, it was otherwise appointed. Lord-Advocate Jeffrey answered in the shrillest negative : the place, not in his gift, is for some emeritus Clerk of his ; and I gather thus much, which in my present posture is something, "lean no ounce of thy weight on *that* side ; there too thou art the most unpromotable of men."

But now comes properly my *second* piece of news, which is greater than all the rest. Within the last three days we are actually talking in a quite practical way of a removal to London this Whitsuntide ! My Dame is at this moment writing to Mrs. Austin about houses : do you see her, and aid if you can. And so we are to meet then ? Yes, I pray and hope so. It is but a cutting and tearing asunder once for all of a number of ties, a leaving of Brothers and a Mother ; a *taking* that considerable plunge, and swimming while you can hold out, sinking when you can no longer do it. Except in the little circle of my own kindred, I know of no soul out of London whose society cheers or fortifies me : in *this* circle free working is impossible ; why *not* London then ? You know me as professing Antigigmanism in all senses, and openly proclaiming it : food and raiment of some kind shall not be denied me (or I will make a far tougher struggle yet) ; with these one can toil cheerfully, *not* for the Devil ; and know the Love of Brother men, of a like heart : and a few years ends it ; and the question, as I continually say, becomes not What wages hadst thou ? but What work didst thou ? So we will venture : *andar con Dios*.

Write me soon, soon.—On second thoughts, I fancy perhaps, *Knox* might be the better of those Papers to begin with. Or perhaps neither of them may look suitable : I shall understand it better by and by.

You will be amazed to hear of me reading a Greek Homer ; such is my employment daily at the otherwise stupid hour of five. I like the old fellow really *amazingly* ; he does more good than I can express ; creates a whole Portici [*seal covers*] (so cheaply) under my Kilmarnock Bonnet.—Adieu, dear Mill.

T. C.

LETTER 20

This is Carlyle's last letter to Mill from Craigenputtock ; his next is dated from 5 Great Cheyne Row, Chelsea, which he and Mrs. Carlyle took possession of early in June, 1834.

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CRAIGENPUTTOCK,
18th April, 1834.

MY DEAR MILL,

You have heard nothing of me for more weeks than usual ; and probably guess the reason. Having the near and nearer prospect of meeting you face to face, and discussing with boundless convenience the much that lies between us, I say to myself, Indolence eagerly assenting : Why write ? These mighty matters, treated on little scraps of paper, were but mistreated : let them lie over till we can speak and answer ! This little Note, then, comes chiefly as a memento of my continued being and goodwill ; above all of my continued, unsated, insatiable appetite to hear from you. Thus provident Kitchenmaids, when the pump will not act otherwise, pour in a little

quart of water, and expect confidently to get gallons. May it prove so !

In fact, my Friend, I feel as if it were rather questionable to meddle at all with these beliefs of yours ; as if my influence, granting that I had much, might rather unsettle and perplex than forward and strengthen. You are already, happily, not closed in, which I trust you will never be, yet compacted and adjusted into vigorous healthful growth, and go on your way with firm footing and cheerful heart : this, as I take it, is all that any kind of world-theory can do for any man. As you grow further, and the new want arises, then will the new light be in season ; properly for the first time, at once desirable and possible. However, as there is no spiritual secret between us, I promise you while we live together the amplest insight into my whole way of thought ; you shall look till you tire into my inward household, and see the strange farrago of broken pots and Achilles' shields, of lumber-heaps and scattered pearl-grains I keep there ; and shall wonder at it, I doubt not ; and even profit by it, as one man always does by earnest sympathy with another ; as I myself hope to do by you in return. You shall also instruct me about innumerable things in London which it deeply concerns me to be no longer ignorant of ; and so I beg of you beforehand to speak with all freedom of utterance, as I shall listen with the understanding heart ; and let us stand by one another in mutual help, in thankfulness and tolerance, giving and forgiving, while the Fates will so allow it. *Quod bonum, faustum, felix, fortunatumque sit !*

I have not written a word these many months ; I feel as if it were the impossiblest thing to put pen to paper in this mood. You will find me altered and altering ; my world widens but grows also more unmanageable. Oh, an altogether unfathomable world ! Fearful and wonderful ; that is all I can freely express

of it. Nevertheless, one is never wretched with the feeling of growth in him ; you feel as if some time or other the day of utterance *must* come, and the world meanwhile might go which way soever it would not but go ; the rather as its bounties, beyond food and clothes, were a thing you could more and more see into the meaning of. In some few years we shall be in Eternity ; naked and bare before the Eternal : there is no fact in Heaven or Earth more indubitable than this ! *Believe* it then, and work patiently in well-doing.

I have read great quantities of Books ; I fear, with more capacity of throat than power of digestion. In fact, there is so little worth attempting to digest. "Froth and coagulated water," the hungry soul swallows them and is not fed.—By the bye, have your Books lost their flavour of whisky yet ?¹ I hope and pray, the whisky was not spilled on them, but only imparted its odour, not its substance ! I remember I rather liked, not *Arthur Coningsby*, yet the Author of it, and meant to ask you who he was. Bulwer's *England and the English* has little in it to hate, and here and there the feeblest dilution of a "Tenuity" that one might almost love. The astonishing thing is the contrast of the man and his enterprise :

Weightiest of harrows, what horse shall ply it ?
Cheeriest of sparrows meanwhile will try it.

But the reading worth all other readings continues to be my *Homer*. Glorious old Book, which one would save, next after the Bible, from a universal conflagration of Books ! I will talk to you about this till your head ring with it, as my own does.

Mrs. Austin has probably told you of her heroic search after a house for us, and how we are to be her

¹ Mill's parcel of books in transit from Edinburgh to London had by some accident become "saturated by whisky," as Mill informed Carlyle in his last letter.

1834]

CARLYLE'S LETTERS TO

and your neighbours ; in Kensington. It is well done. We grieve heartily at poor Mr. A.'s affliction ; a really sad case ! " Hope deferred maketh the heart sick."—Those *Notes on the Newspapers* would be a dainty for me, could I get them. I see you often of late in the *Examiner*, at first, and at second hand ; for I know everything of yours, as soon as I read the first line. It has a face on it of distinctness, of sincerity and solidity, which *too* well distinguishes it in these days.—The French Quartos on the *Collier* will be worth the money you mention to a Collector of such works, for there is many a curious *ephemeron* there ; manuscripts, engraved and printed : these are not in my way.

When shall I have a Letter then ? *Gehab' Dich wohl !*

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 21

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Monday [early in September, 1834].

MY DEAR MILL,

A not undeserving man, whom, I think, you have seen here, or heard me speak of by the name of Tom Holcroft, is setting out for Paris ; and wishes to employ his few weeks of residence there in acquiring some knowledge of French things ; especially things Political and Journalistic ; having, as I gather, some views of corresponding with some English Newspaper or other during his absence. He is not one whose qualifications can reflect lustre on our side of the water ; but also they will not reflect disgrace ; for he means well, has strong lineaments of character, if not a character itself ; on the whole, wants culture rather than faculty ; and being a man I believe of

manful demeanour, in rather a peculiar position, and to me in particular extremely obliging ever since I first saw him, he interests me a little.

I have given him a Note to Duveyrier, noting his claims as Holcroft the dramatist's son, and Mercier the Conventionist's grandson ; not without misgivings lest it come to nothing ; for I do not so much as know Duveyrier's address. This latter deficiency at least I imagine you can supply. Holcroft lives at No. 13 Clifford's Inn. If you pass along Fleet Street (which I am not sure of) tomorrow morning, perhaps you could leave a Note addressed to him with the requisite indication : I am to be there at 11 o'clock, not after 11, and can complete Duveyrier's superscription as needful. The Porter of Clifford's Inn, close by St. Dunstan's Church, will take the Note. If you do not pass that way, the Twopenny Postman will. Observe only that Tom goes off on Wednesday morning, and be not *too* late. If you had any Parcel or message to carry, doubtless he would be happy to take charge of it. So much for that.

I despatch the Carrier only today for the Books.¹ All last week I was if not idle too indifferently engaged : with mere English matters, with Burns, even with Hannah More ! The French business grows darker and darker upon me : dark as was Chaos. *Ach Gott !*

A copy of *Teufelsdröckh*² was marked for you ;

¹ A large collection of books on the subject of the French Revolution, which Mill had offered to lend to Carlyle, who had already begun to write his *French Revolution : A History*.

² This was a copy of *Sartor Resartus* printed from the types of *Fraser's Magazine* (where it had appeared serially), bound as a pamphlet or thin volume. Carlyle had asked James Fraser to print for him sixty of such copies for presentation to friends, before the magazine type was distributed. The little book or pamphlet is now very rare. Mrs. Carlyle's copy, still preserved, bears this inscription in Carlyle's hand : " To Jane W. Carlyle. This little book, little Milestone in a desolate, confused, yet not (as we hope) unblest Pilgrimage we make in common, is with heart's gratitude inscribed by her affectionate T. C."

1834]

CARLYLE'S LETTERS TO

another for Mrs. Taylor ; I hope the man sent them. As Byron said of his club-foot : *Dinna speak o't !*

Am I not to see you soon ?

Ever affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 22

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Friday [5th September, 1834].

MY DEAR MILL,

Either of the days you mention will do very well for the Letter ; about which there is no special haste.

I shall be truly gratified to see M. Carrel ; indeed, I may say, vexed if I do not see him. I am to be out tonight ; but no other of these next three or four nights, for aught I at present know.

The *Diamond Necklace* (poor little object) again turns up on me. I meant to speak categorically with Fraser today about it, but did not see him. Would Effingham Wilson, think you, or any other reputable Bookseller that you know, be inclined to undertake it, on such evidence as could be honestly given him ? I have come so far as to consent, hardly or very slightly to wish, that it *should* come out, before anything else come ; for this reason, among various others, that I might see what the people said of it, and so perhaps gain a little glimmering of light about my next production. I think it might have this title : "The Diamond Necklace : A History. From the French of Potdevin. With Notes. By T. Carlyle." I will speak of it as being "in rhyme in the *original*" (which it partly was), and so forth ; and give it a kind of quizzical garniture, thro' which the true authorship may peer out clearly

enough. What think you of "Potdevin" (Pot-of-wine, Into-the-bargain)! I can give criticisms of *him*; and you, with still more freedom, of us both.

If on the other hand no Bookseller will draw his Purse-strings in this great enterprise, it is quite clear to me that neither I nor you ought to do it.¹

Come soon.

Ever affectionately,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 23

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Thursday [12th February, 1835].

MY DEAR MILL,

Hunt² will be at you tomorrow, or at farthest on Saturday; hungry as a hyæna. To cut off from him the very temptation to play false, I beforehand furnish you with the enclosed receipt; testifying visibly that he has already (with your five) eaten twenty shillings of his wages. His work, what part of it I have seen, seems very tolerably done; nor have I, of my own insight, anything (except that crime of hunger) to urge against him. He has not even intruded himself on me, unless when driven by necessity stronger than an armed man. Poor devil! And yet one can do nothing for him, so good as leave him almost if not altogether alone. *Wer nicht anspannt, dem kann man nicht vorspannen*,³ is one of the truest proverbs in the world.

¹ Mill thought so highly of the *Diamond Necklace* as to offer to print it at his own expense that he might have the pleasure of reviewing it.

² John Hunt, one of the many poor people whom Carlyle had taken pity on and was striving to help, giving him small sums of money from his own not too abundant supply, and trying to find work for him. Knowing that Mill was in search of a copyist, he writes in behoof of Hunt.

³ Carlyle has elsewhere translated this proverb, "Him that will not yoke, you cannot help with tracing."

These five or six times I have forgotten to answer you in words, what seemed hardly worth writing, that with regard to that wretched *Diamond Necklace*, Fraser did already all but as good as refuse it for his Cesspool of a Magazine : so there again we have a *finis*. Alas ! Considering what a mouse is to be born, is not the parturition dreadful ?—You have a right to know this ; that I may not seem disobliging where it is so little my part to be it.

Remember that properly speaking I did not see you last time !—I am writing at the *Fête des Piques*,¹ the most confused of Mortals. Kind Heaven stand by me !

Ever yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 24

The night before this letter was written, Mill, to whom Carlyle had lent the manuscript of the first volume of his *French Revolution*, called at Cheyne Row and announced that a very grave accident had befallen, which will be best described by citing a passage from Carlyle's *Reminiscences* : "How well do I still remember that night when he came to tell us, pale as Hector's ghost, that my unfortunate First Volume was burnt ! It was like *half* sentence of death to us both ; and we had to pretend to take it lightly, so dismal and ghastly was *his* horror at it, and try to talk of other matters. He staid three mortal hours or so ; his departure quite a relief to us."

That such an accident should have happened to a bulky manuscript while in charge of a man like Mill, accustomed to the care of papers, has seemed

¹ The "Feast of Pikes" is the title of the first book in the second volume of the *French Revolution*, Carlyle having finished the first volume and lent it to Mill "to read and make notes on"—with what fatal consequence next letter will show !

so incredible to many people, that they have not hesitated to suggest foul play in the matter. For example, a little after Mill's death, his unmarried sister, Harriet, pained by reading some of the obituary notices on her brother, wrote to Carlyle on the 15th of May, 1873, as follows : " In the notice of the *Daily Telegraph* of Saturday, mention is made of the unhappy loss of your manuscript, and Mrs. Taylor is described as the ' Heroine ' (a sad misnomer) of that incident. As far as my recollection goes, the misfortune arose from my brother's own inadvertence in having given your papers amongst wastepaper for kitchen use." She then begs Carlyle to tell her the true story of the loss. He must have replied to her (his letter has never been published, so far as I know), for she writes to him again on the 18th : " Your most kind and feeling letter has done me much good. . . . Many thanks for your most soothing letter." That goes far to prove that Carlyle himself had no belief in the theory of foul play,—on the part of Mill at any rate. In a letter of the 10th of March, 1835, Mill tells Carlyle : " It [the burnt MS.] had not only the *one* reader you mentioned but a second as good " [who was Mrs. Taylor].—Let me call the reader's special attention to the ensuing letter, surely a remarkable one to have been written in such circumstances.

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Saturday [7th March, 1835].

MY DEAR MILL,

How are you ? You left me last night with a look which I shall not soon forget. Is there anything that I could do or suffer or say to alleviate you ? For I feel that your sorrow must be far sharper than mine ; yours bound to be a *passive* one. How true

is this of Richter : " *All* Evil is like a nightmare ; the instant you begin to *stir* under it, it is *gone*."

I have ordered a *Biographie Universelle*, this morning ;—and a better sort of paper. Thus, far from giving up the game, you see, I am risking another £10 on it. Courage, my Friend !

That I can never write *that* Volume again is indubitable : singular enough, the whole Earth could not get *it* back ; but only a better or a worse one. There is the strangest dimness over it. A figure thrown into the melting-pot ; but the metal (all that was golden or gold-like of that,—and *copper*, can be gathered) is there ; the model also *is*, in my head. O my Friend, how easily might the bursting of some puny ligament or filament have abolished all light *there* too !

That I *can* write a Book on the French Revolution is (God be thanked for it) as clear to me as ever ; also that if life be given me so long, I will. To it again, therefore ! *Andar con Dios* !

I think you once said you could borrow me a *Campan* ? Have you any more of *Lacretelle's* things ; his 18^{me} *Siècle* ? (that is of almost no moment). The first vol. of *Genlis's Mém.* ? &c. But I find *Campan* (if I get the *Biographie*) is the only one I shall really want much. Had I been a *trained* Compiler, I should not have wanted that. To make some search for it, I know, will be a kind of solace to you.

Thanks to Mrs. Taylor for her kind sympathies. May God guide, and bless you both ! That is my true prayer.

Ever your affectionate Friend,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 25

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Monday [9th March, 1835].

MY FRIEND,

You shall do the thing you so earnestly entreat for : it is not unreasonable ; *ungigmanic* it may either be or not be. How lucky, in this as in other instances, that neither of us has money for the lifting ; that neither of us is wealthy, and one of us poor ! It has positively hereby become a case which money can remedy. For my own share I find that the thought of my having got day's wages for my labour will give a new face to the whole matter : what more do I ever expect (so often not finding it) but day's wages for my work ? It is likely enough this may prove the only portion of the Book I may ever get so much for. I can attack the thing again, with unabated cheerfulness ; and certainly, one may hope, do it better and not worse.

For you again : the smart of having in so simple a way, forfeited so much money (which you also had to work for) may well burn out the other smart ; and so, the precious feeling of a satisfied conscience succeeding to great pain, the whole business be healed, and even be made *wholer* than ever. Let us believe firmly that, to those who take them wisely, *all things whatsoever are good*.

I am to be out tonight, at tea with Allan Cunningham. The following nights we are at home : on Thursday night, I could even hope to give you the completed *Fête des Piques* (if I get on well),—provided you durst take it' : with me it were no daring ; for

¹ Mill declined this offer, preferring " for the sake of retributive justice to wear the badge of his untrustworthiness." No more of the manuscript was seen by him, and he first read the *French Revolution* in print, when preparing to review it.

I think of all men living you are henceforth the least likely to commit such an oversight again. I mean also by the first good opportunity to let you see a little farther into my actual economic position here than you have yet done : these confusions, I feel, have thrown us still closer together than we were ; and I hope in that sense too will be blessed.

One thing I forgot to mention on Saturday : That we will not *speak* of the misfortune, to any new unconcerned person ; at least not till it is made good again, or made better. I had to impart it in general terms to the Bookseller Fraser, but only in general ; as “ an accident ” chargeable on no one ; and he has promised me to maintain perfect silence. My Brother John and my Mother must know of it ; but no other has right to do so.

Among the Books needful one of the needfullest, as I now bethink me, is on your own shelves : Condorcet's *Life of Turgot*. Pray bring it in your pocket. I will also have de Staël's *Considerations* ; but this I think I can procure perhaps more readily than you.—The thing must be made *better* than it was, or we shall never be able, not to forget it, but to laugh victorious in remembering it.

And so, now for the *Champ de Mars* ! And with you be all good !

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 26

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHelsea,

Tuesday [17th March, 1835].

MY DEAR MILL,

You are right in this matter, and yet also wrong ; and have sent me just *twice* the sum due. By the correctest computation I can institute, I find

the writing of that thing to have cost me in money wages not £200 but £100 : more than the latter sum, accepted on such grounds, were a *defrauding of the revenue*. It was among the *slowest* feats of writing I ever executed ; and tho' the rewriting of it is new and very singular work (for I have been at it these two days), it surely cannot prove slower.

Will you therefore cancel this little Document, and make out another for half the amount.

One hundred Pounds thrown away as in a whiff of smoke is damage enough ! It is a distracted wasteful world,—where the Devil is busy.—But we are not to speak of it, till the whole is made good again.

On Thursday night your Books will be welcome, and yourself welcomer.

Ever faithfully yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 27

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,
Friday morning [27th March, 1835].

MY DEAR MILL,

That day at the India House I meant to settle with you about our little cash account, had not Sterling¹ come in : yesterday I ought to have written ; but was sickly, *busy* and incapable of being busy.

I am very loath to decline anything that would gratify you : but I find on the whole, and with all anxiety to avoid anything *superfine* in the matter, that I must abide by the original scheme. It is definite, gives me no doubt or reluctance ; all beyond that is vague, *incalculable*, and hovers upon regions

¹ John Sterling, who was now or very lately had been curate at Herstmonceux, and had run up to Town for a day or two. This was the first meeting between him and Carlyle.

one would not wish to have any trade in. By *it*, not only is the burden *equalised* among us, but diminished in absolute quantity ; by the other scheme *you* would have a heavier share of it, but the whole were augmented rather, and my share not lightened. Let us be content then with the best we can do.

We are to be out on Sunday night and Tuesday night ; not otherwise that I know of.

I have seen Wordsworth again, and find my former interpretation of him strengthened. He seems to me a most *natural* man (a mighty point in these days) ; and flows on there, delivering what is really in him, platitudes or wisdoms as the case may be. A really *earthborn well*, not an artificial *jet d'eau* : let us be satisfied with the "day of small things."

Ever faithfully yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 28

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Monday night [20th April, 1835].

MY DEAR MILL,

We are to be at home tomorrow night ; but with people whom, I doubt, you would not make much of : Allan Cunningham and his Brother and his Wife ; perhaps also a Dr. Willis, Scotch-Teutonic philosophico-sentimental, with the beautifullest English Wife, who plays and sings like a Seraph. If you think you can do anything with it, come too.

If not, we are to be alone next night : at tea about half-past six.

Thanks for the Review ; which I looked into not without interest ; tho', as you anticipated, with but stinted edification. The Paper on Chadwick is good and very good : distinguished by perfect precision ; and set forth with a cold emphasis,—satisfac-

tory to look upon. Sedgwick's title to *judge* of the Utilitarians must be regarded as annihilated ; he can only still have his feeling about them, and condemn their creed on the old principle of " I do not like thee, Dr. Fell " ; —which, after all, has its weight too. If you had indicated in the background (*this* discussion being so handsomely disposed of) the *nullity* of both Theories, and of all such, past, present and future, about such matters, I should have had little more to desire. But to you I fancy they are not null ; tho' my prophecy occasionally is that they will become so.

The whole remainder of the Review seems to me *Perronet-Thomsonish*, *Taitish* ; and requiring amendment. Your people seem to believe what they say (as these others do) ; but have otherwise small claim to be heard *often*. I sigh with more sadness than you can imagine to think that this is the truest Truth now going ; the softest " soft green of the soul " one has to repose on, this hard Macadamised highway ! It is better than a quagmire too. God mend it !

I have been very ill and stupid ; above all the latter : but am recovering my wits again. *Eheu ! Eheu !*

Yours ever truly,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 29

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Wednesday morning [27th May, 1835].

MY DEAR MILL,

Hannah More's Books have never come ; and now I begin to question whether it is not too late.¹ If they are bought, I will still at least take a look at them : if they are not bought, pray do not buy them.

¹ " Spoke of writing on Hannah More for it [*London Review*] : Books have not come ; so the thing is off."—Carlyle's *Journal*, 26th May, 1835.

This is now the third week I have gone quite idle ; merely reading or talking all manner of nonsense or sense I fell in with : against which state of things conscience, like an angry scorpion, protests stinging. I have resumed that *old* Sorrow ; less to work at it, hitherto, than to walk thro' it and round it, with what clearness is possible, considering how to take it up,—or whether throwing it *down*, and into the fire, one good time for all, were not the better method for it. I will do nothing rashly ; but in one way or the other I must be rid of it, if I would live peaceably in this Earth. Let it not distress you. I continue to believe with the tenacity of a *credo quia impossibile* that it is and will be verily all for the *best*.

We have seen a good deal of Sterling since you were here ; and like him very much. His name surely is Hopeful, or Hoping. We even heard him preach.

When is this walk to take place ? I expect to be at home almost every night for some time.

Garnier's¹ Translation, as I take it, has evaporated. It would have done your heart good to see and hear with what a shriek of amazement little Tilt of Fleet Street "declined *the Article*." To me it seemed to say again : Book-writing is done here, my friend ; seek thou another trade.

Come soon as may be.

Ever faithfully yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 30

Carlyle finished the re-writing of the burnt volume of his *French Revolution* on the 21st of September, and being in great need of a rest after such an ordeal, went off to Scotland early in October, leaving Mrs.

¹ Garnier, a German refugee, "big, dusty, smoky, scarred with duel-cuts," trying to turn an honest penny by translating, etc.

Carlyle to the care of her Mother, who was then on a visit at Cheyne Row.

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

SCOTSBRIG, ECCLEFECHAN,
30th October, 1835.

MY DEAR MILL,

There are moods one falls into, wherein speech is of all tasks the most frightful and also the most unprofitable ; other moods I have known wherein speech tho' still frightful was not unprofitable but the contrary : we shall flatter ourselves that it is only under the latter category I have come today, when driven on by an unquiet conscience I in the laziest manner take up the pen for you. The spirit is willing, but O, how weak is the flesh ! In fact, I should not have promised, or should only have promised conditionally : on condition that the *Daimon* impelled me to do it. In that case, you had saved some small peculium of postage, which the Patriot King (with a blessing to him !) will now get ; and I had passed another morning languidly drifting among this wreck of all highest and lowest things ; a chaos of sights, remembrances, emotions, Prophecy brought suddenly side by side with Cattle-dealing, fragments of the Æmpyrean tumbling confusedly amid floating masses of Annandale Peat-bog ! Alas, I am afloat, and all is afloat ; and I have flung myself down, and said : Be it so then ; only let it be without farther effort of mine. To speak in articulate sentences about all this matter, or about any matter whatever, is such a task as you may fancy. Could I play on any violin or trombone, or rather on a hundred violins and trombones at once, I would thunder you out a whole crash of preternatural fiddling, or some such thing ; and that were my speech.

The best news is, first, that I am coming home to

you again very soon ; it would have been tomorrow but the Liverpool Steamboat did not answer in its hour : secondly, that I feel much strengthened by this rustication of mine, and am really far healthier than when we parted. I did not know, till plumped all at once out of the noisy sin and misery of London into the solitude of the old innocent Earth here (which at lowest afflicts you only with mud and rain), how fretted and shattered and altogether exasperated off my just balance, I had been : all things produced such a disproportionate diseased impression on me ; my little Sister singing a Scotch song was like to set me a-crying ; the clear brooks ran each with the beauty of an Eurotas or Siloa for me ; on the other hand, the stupidity of fools was enough to drive me *mad*. Alas, there is no health in London, for the body or the mind. It is a fever-dream there of double and treble feverishness ; a mad dream,—from which one awakes in Eternity ! Unhappy that the tools for your work ; that the free heart of your fellow man, opened fearlessly towards you fearless, were it only once in the thousand trials, is nowhere else to be met with. One must take the evil and the good.

On the whole, I have been, comparatively speaking, very happy here. There is the truest affection, which no colour of fortune, not mishap or even misconduct could alter, all round me ; there are no riches in any King's Treasury that will weigh against this. Then further one has *quietness* : sweet inexpressibly are these pale still days ; the air noiseless, the very barndoor fowls fallen silent ; only the voice of some husbandman peaceably directing his thatchers and potato-diggers (all visible far and wide if you stroll out) ; or perhaps, at evening, of some acre or two of crows making wing to the rooky wood, generally engaged in rather *loud* conversation. And all the waggons, hackney and glass coaches, dog-carts, nightmen, daymen, noblemen, gentlemen, gismen,

grinding along at the distance of 319 miles from you ; the smoke of their torment ascending up *there* ! It is a fine open region of knolls and brooks, fringed only with hawthorn, with natural brushwood in the craggy dingles ; planted wood-groups not enough for shelter, far from imprisonment, from occecation ! A hundred yards from this fire-place I can see, as it were, all the kingdoms of the world : the Solway grown quicksilver, all out to Saint-Bees, Carlisle smoke and Annan Steeple ; the thousand craggy summits of Galloway, of Cumberland, Yorkshire, on this hand and on that ; and noticed yesterday that Skiddaw and Helvellyn, for example, had put on their white hair-powder,—the cold of winter being at hand. Nay, close by on the edge of my native Burnswark, there sat till a week ago three white military tents (making “ great Military Survey,” I understand), directly on the spot where Agricola still declares that he planted himself near eighteen hundred years before ; for his *vallums*, his *aggers*, and all the rest, have lain quite unmolested ever since except by the rains and the small hoofs of sheep ; and are all there as fresh as life ; the very well, as is natural for it, bubbling up its waters yet, *not* on the Artesian principle. To see their white canvas houses built close beside the old green conic mounds (also three in number) with so different an object was worth a turning of the eye. Farther, I have seen “ the Comet ” ;¹ tho’ not looking for it ! The wonder hung himself out gratuitously for me, one night, while he journeyed near the Greater Bear : really a most singular nebulous-looking fellow ; confused, sulky, as large as your watch, and then with a great train or ribbon at him, a fathom long, woven apparently of moonbeams ;—hurrying on, with high-pressure speed, God knows whence, God knows whither, and on what business ! The sight of him

¹ Halley’s Comet, then paying us one of his periodic visits.

struck me unexpectedly, under the still night, with astonishment, almost with awe. Who could but say to him : Hail, thou brother Thing ; created also by God ; welcome out of immensity, be thy intents wicked or charitable ! At that moment, how much wiser, *truer* seemed the superstitious terror of the Old Time, when the eye, if opened superstitiously, was *not shut* to Nature, but worshipped her, than the “ small difficult crowing ” and triumphant quackle-quackling of the Diffusion Society intent only on sine and cosine ! But to speak in the Progress-of-the-species dialect, shall we not one day have the latter and yet not want the former ? Even Diffusion Society is a progress ; *part* of a step, the *falling* part of it : for it is a great truth (true in a thousand senses) that all “ walking is but a succession of falls.” In this manner then I spend the bright weather of my St. Martin’s Summer ; all the brighter that there come ever and anon horrid days of rain and tempest, with noise, leaves and desolation ; and then as suddenly cease : like bullyings from a choleric person (named Winter) that is not yet in free wrath, but only getting into it. I avoid all gigmen, nearly altogether, am shy even of men lest they disturb me ; I read no Books whatever, except pieces of the Bible and—the *Histoire Parlementaire*. Of the Bible I seem to get more and more understanding, deeper and deeper reverence. It is a Book written by men that *knew* the thing they were writing. Who could fancy there were such a worth in that ; and yet there is. Of the *Hist. Parl.* and whole French Revolution a History in three Books I make exceedingly little at present. Miserable does it seem, miserable I in the midst of it. The whole business lies round me in vague cloudy masses ; far, very far from living form. The part I have formed, or written, looks detestablest of all ; fit only a second time for the fire. Nevertheless I at no moment

hesitate that I must write it out, and then wash my hands. Then for the *next* thing !

As you say, I am delivered from Newspapers ; yet not from the echo of Newspapers, from din and complaint, and the sight of a whole people slowly *revolting* against their old manner of Existence. " Voluntary Church " is the main word here ; uttered with a composed emphasis, and by all people, the most religious seemingly the most emphatic. Our poor old Church of Scotland clutches at the skirts of Episcopacy (not wisely I think) ; and so reels hither and thither as *she* reels, and will go to the Abyss with her, one might calculate. A Tobacconist in Dumfries has gained immortal glory, it would seem, by confuting and dumfounding whole Presbyteries of Reverend Involuntaries, who in evil hour had ventured on a Public Meeting to exhibit the religious and loyal spirit of the Scottish People. When the sheep begin all *baa*ing and even butting against the shepherd, it has an ill look for him.

A man, not a gigman, but whose company I should *not* have preferred to yours, at this moment breaks in upon me ; I have to conclude even faster than I meant. You have what I *could* say ; not the millionth part of what I would ! However on Sunday come a week (Sunday *first* for you) I almost calculate that you may see me at Chelsea, if you like to come down, if no evil befall. There is then, as you observe, freer field for communing. Freer truly ; or it were evil with us ! Remember me very kindly to Grant.¹ Say at Kent Terrace that I hope soon to walk thither, and make my compliments in person. All is confused about me at present ; I myself am confusion worse confounded ! Nevertheless we will still hope, still endeavour. *Vale mei memor !*

T. CARLYLE.

¹ Grant was an official in the India House ; Mill's intimate friend and fellow-worker.

LETTER 31

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Thursday night [26th February, 1836].

MY DEAR MILL,

I can, as you conjecture, do nothing with the Lichfield Editorship ; least of all at present.

Does Fonblanque know Craik, late of the *Printing Machine* ? Since once that I heard you speak of Craik, I have happened to fall in with him ; and fancy you would rate his value higher than your estimate at that time seemed to go. He is a man limited ; but honest, and singularly *healthy*, and even robust, within his limits. He cannot be brilliant, but he can be decided, clear, and even emphatic. I should think him a believer with his whole heart in such policy as this present Russell-Melbourne, and open to all manner of farther light. The man is good-tempered, courageous ; can take a handsome lift of anything. If I mistake not, such an offer would be excellent news to him at present : I have not heard of him for months ; which means, I fear, that he is in straits and uncertainty.

I have been thinking of the *London and Westminster Review*. Why cannot you, to give all readers a spice of an entirely new ingredient got among you, print—the *Diamond Necklace* ? The *Epicier* was as a kind of introduction to such things. It might stand at the close of No. I. ; and then, before No. II., I were done with my Second Volume ; and could rest till I wrote you a good swinging *Mirabeau* ! Why these *two* things have got together so indissolubly in my head, I cannot say. If it be not that I want to march in the front with you in this new campaign, and cannot otherwise appear in the first action ? I should add too that Fraser has been hinting to me lately about that Piece (poor man, blown about by

many winds) ; and can plead a kind of conditional promise,—which I should be too happy to escape from in this way, and so to have *already* DONE my last work in that Cesspool of his. Heaven counsel us all !

I hope to meet you in that Kentish village the day after tomorrow. Till then !—

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 32

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

[CHELSEA,
29th February, 1836.]

I got home about seven ; after a wonderful day.¹ Larks sang to me, over the red ploughed land, songs beautiful, mysterious, mournful,—of old days. Heavy seamen at Gravesend sat drinking heavy-wet. Then at three the Steamer, crowded miscellaneous as Noah's Ark, tumbled me back to the great Babylon, where for me also there was a little cranny to rest in.—I am not well ; but I hope not permanently ill, or worse. I think Mr. Hickson a very interesting worthy man ; and am glad that I have seen him.

Will you "Accuse the reception" of this poor MS. ? I do not trust the *Threepennies* altogether.

T. C.

LETTER 33

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,
2nd March, 1836.

MY DEAR MILL,

I am really almost sorry for you with this *Necklace* ; and begin to wish I had not troubled you

¹ Spent with Mill in and around the Kentish village mentioned at the end of last letter. The MS. referred to in the last paragraph was that of the *Diamond Necklace*.

with it at present. The *On-dira*, I fear, let the thing be published as it will, is like to be multiform, uncertain, little to the point : of a hundred readers, even that have felt there was some stuff in it, ninety and nine will call it singular, extravagant in form ; if some ten of them have a kind of inward misgiving, a feeling that the form after all perhaps came from *within*, and was what it *best* could be, and only contradicted Blair's Lectures and use-and-wont because it could not help it,—I shall reckon it much. And then the new complexity of its appearing in such a vehicle ? I try greatly to put myself in your place ; but cannot, with any effect towards due counsel, succeed in that. My plan I find hitherto in all cases has been a kind of desperate exclusive dependence on the *substance* of the thing to be judged of ; leaving all its *accidents* to settle their own account as they could and would. If the thing comes out *from* the right place, I say to myself, it will go *to* the right place. It is a simple plan this, but perhaps a kind of desperate one. If I stood environed with responsibilities, &c., &c., who knows but I might see good to modify it not a little ? My own habit is to read everything that has any reality of interest in it without asking questions ; pardoning indeed *all* things, but the want of this which is *unpardonable*.

On the whole however I seem to see pretty well that unless this singularity can be presented standing on its own legs, and telling its own story with calm face, we shall never make much of it. To try to squeeze it into the shape of a review-article, as such go, would be but a kind of deception ; more offensive to a right Radical taste than an open sin were. You might write a preface (tho' I question whether it would profit), you might append Notes, modifications, *Sauerteig* and the rest of it : but the thing, it seems to me, cannot be altered from its present shape without becoming a *quodlibet* of which no one (not even myself

now) can give account. Fancy the matter standing like an *Epicier* ; calmly beginning, and going on, as if there were nothing wrong : it presupposes a great *change* in the form and character of the Periodical, a questionable extension of its object, a throwing down of its limits ; a thing questionable, but not a thing stupid or false.

For the rest I care nothing about *phrases*, provided the meaning or a better one be expressed : I doubt meanwhile whether the *gig* could be weeded out without detriment, but it might be expounded with effect enough in a note on first using it. On the other hand (tho' my Wife agrees in your opinion) it still seems to me, Cagliostro's sermon ought to stand ; that the cutting of it off were a shearing of a man's *skirts* away, and leaving him in the most incomplete state.—Does all this throw any light whatever on the course you have to take ? It makes the question for you simpler : Will the inevitable *wonder* over this thing do good or do ill ? Will those who cry, What an extravagant mountebank ; or those who say inwardly, What will he say next ? let us hear him,—be the more numerous ?

In conclusion, my dear Mill, let me remind you that my private interest in this thing is quite small ; nay, God knows whether in the long run it is not nothing. Secondly, that if by any chance you decided affirmatively and thereby did yourself a mischief, it would fly in the teeth of *my* best purpose too (the only portion of my purpose worth attending to), and be to me of all persons the most disagreeable.¹

So I leave it with you, therefore. My pen is scratchy, and my hand and my heart tonight ; and I can say

¹ Although Mill himself greatly admired the *Diamond Necklace*, he feared it would not be suitable for the *London and Westminster Review*, and hesitated long without giving a decision either pro or con. Meantime James Fraser volunteered to accept it, and it appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*, Nos. 85 and 86, 1837. See Carlyle's *Miscellanies*, vol. v.

nothing other or clearer ; being indeed in a very puny dispirited way—till I grow better again. . . .

Can you within the next few weeks send me back the *Louvet*? I shall not need it for a month.—I have not put pen to paper since Friday last ; and did it with small effect then. God be merciful to me ! I surely ought to be in some other Planet than this.

Believe me ever,

Yours heartily,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 34

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

2nd May, 1836.

MY DEAR MILL,

About a week ago, I finished my second volume. It was my purpose on that occasion to surprise you with a visit at the India House ; but I heard two days before that you were gone to Brighton ; a thing I was glad and sad at. For almost a fortnight before that, I had been kept prisoner by a cold, and could not get to you. What your special address is, if it be not Post Office, Brighton, I do not yet know : your Sisters were here one day ; but I was out, and this practical enquiry was neglected. I send this to Grant, who probably has Official means of communication. Pray write to me how you get on : say, if possible, that you are growing better ; that you will soon be back to us.

These two sheets are the thing that I promised to do about the *Histoire Parlementaire* :¹ the present *inter-regnum* was the time for doing it. Is it not far too

¹ The *Parliamentary History of the French Revolution* was published in the *London and Westminster Review*, No. 9. See Carlyle's *Miscellanies*, vol. v.

long for the *Examiner*? Whether it will suit that or any other Newspaper or Publication, or can be made to do so, I leave for your judgement and management. Cut and clip at discretion; I only wanted to keep my word. The Proem might be excised: the Extract is rather long; but it is favourable and good. I once thought, this morning, a few more Extracts might be added; and it would make a kind of Review Article? Do as you like and can.—If I persist in this wretched scribbling craft, I purpose rather to write more things in the *currente-calamo* manner; and to gain the habit of doing it.

Leigh Hunt's Pension seems to take a fair turn. There is a great running and driving: Lady Blessington, Dr. Bowring, Serjeant Talfourd;—did all this originate in your message to Lytton Bulwer? It is like the stone Saussure saw fall on a slope of the Alps; it fell, and quietly folded itself over once or twice: but the place was a precipice of stones and shingle: so there rose a perfect avalanche of that sort of thing; spreading over acres; and whole forests were swept away.—In plain prose, there is a real hope of the business. I told Jeffrey of it, when he was here; he ran off to Spring Rice forthwith: I have seen Buller since, who had got a Letter from you about it. What is rather questionable, they have told Hunt himself, and his hopes are rather high: his necessities, poor man, were never greater.

Sterling did himself ill in the East wind; and kept close within doors again; but continues to gather strength. He is for Rome now, it seems. My Brother John is here these two weeks and more; desirous to renew acquaintance with you. He and I called one day at Kent Terrace; but the Lady was not there.

I have seen Cavaignac and Marast twice. I like both the men. C. in particular strikes me as the best Frenchman by many degrees whom I have met with.

A courageous energetic man, with much free Nature and *bonhomie* in his composition ; really a Son of Nature, tho' French and in this time. We should get along beautifully together, would he speak a little plainer, or learn to speak English never so obscurely.—My Wife is complaining very much, of colds and illness, in this wretched weather : she sends you her kind regards ; regrets much that you have been invisible so long.

I had surely innumerable other things to say : but the light is failing ; my memory in the hurry has got entirely confused.—I must terminate ; in the hope of soon hearing from you. Then if there be anything to say, I may say it more at leisure by a new opportunity.

Take care of yourself, and recover with all despatch.

Ever faithfully yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 35

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

[CHELSEA,
End of May, 1836.]

MY DEAR MILL,

Many thanks for your Letters, for the *Hist. Parl.* ; for all your kind messages and attentions to me. I meant to have been at the India House, or somehow to have met you, long before this ; but a miserable influenza (with a blessing to it !) keeps me pining mostly at home ; incapable oftenest even of forming a resolution. And you too are sickly ; and your Father's house is in distress. Things go not well with us. We must wait and *hope*. One of these days you shall surely see me in one way or another : this despicability of a disorder is promising to abate.

The foreign Packet, charged £5—16—0, presented itself the day after your Note. By a Letter that came along with it, I learned that it was—what think you? A pamphlet of Dr. Channing's on Slavery (or some such thing), and the American Edition of *Teufelsdröckh*! Instantaneous rejection to the Dead Letter Office was inevitable. Next day my Brother called on Freeling or some of his people; they offered him the Packet for ten shillings: but 3/6 was the maximum of my commission to him; so *Teufelsdröckh* lies dormant, very singularly again, waiting his new destiny; never to be liberated by *me*. I cannot but laugh at the whole matter, it looks so confused and absurd.

What to say of *Mirabeau*? I spread the Book all down before me, after your Brighton Letter; twice attempted to fasten on it, twice failed: *bis patriæ cecidere manus*! It seems as if there were but one blessedness for me in the world, that of getting *done* with this fatal History of mine: the thought that one day I shall *not* have it weighing down the life of me is like a prophecy of resurrection. And yet I am unjust to the poor Book. It enables me, it mainly, ^v to sit all this while in the quietest defiance I have ever felt of a whole world so contradictory and menacing; awaiting the issue really with a kind of indifference that astonishes myself. Your last Note brings the thing again to the judgement seat. I will see you before deciding irrevocably. Indeed till this coughing and pining abate, I ought to decide nothing.

Pray do not take the trouble of sending any more Newspapers to Moss's. When you are writing to me, or when I see you, give me three of the latest you have at hand: I have a use for them (I send them to my Mother and Friends instead of Letters); but three are quite enough for that: and as to reading of Newspapers I find Fonblanque to have become again quite abundant for me.

John is very impatient to meet you; and will

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go, I think, himself, if I do not accompany him very soon.

I am in great haste ; my Wife waiting for me. Surely I have forgotten two or three things.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 36

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Thursday [2nd June, 1836].

MY DEAR MILL,

On Thursday morning, instead of Monday, I write to say not that I have begun *Mirabeau*, but that I am determined to begin it,—in spite of Nature and of my stars. To begin ; and also to end : so you would have it. On Saturday come a fortnight we shall see what has produced itself ;—surely the fatallest *Sooterkin* evolved in these times. *Invita, invitissima Minerva !*

I have yet no scheme of the thing ; that frightful quarry of *Mémoires*, with its eight volumes of “shot rubbish,” must be rummaged over again, for I find I have forgotten all specialties of it, and kept almost no Notes. I have spent all my interest for the man ; also the East wind is blowing. You may expect one of the worst Articles you ever read ; an Article that will do you no *good*,—except as testifying the wish I have always to do what you ask me. This is not vain higgler's speech ; but too sad a truth : preparation for the sad result that is coming. Enough ; let us to work !

With a head dry as the remainder biscuit ; with a heart full of all unspeakabilities—

Good be with you !

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 37

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Monday morning [6th June, 1836].

MY DEAR MILL,

You are very good : do not mind what I wrote to you ; or fret yourself thinking that it is a "favour" to *you*, and not twice as much a favour to myself.

The best is, I am pouring out all manner of watery stuff ;¹ and hope to have a kind of readable enough Article ready about the time specified, after all. Of what quantity I cannot say ; but it promises to be very considerable. Wait then till we see ! There are thirteen good days before Saturday come a week, and the West wind is blowing.—For the rest, I have got an enormous white hat, broader than any Quaker's in London ; which is a great comfort ; the Public happily not objecting much to my avoiding headaches in that way,—tho' it gives me the most Preadamite air, and is indeed ugly and ugly-making to a pitch. My Wife has stipulated almost with tears that I shall never wear it "in her sight" ; a condition which I observe.

When you write next, send me three old Newspapers, and special word how you are, and how your Father is.

I have heard nothing of my Brother since Tuesday morning when I saw him mount into the Hull Steamer.

A certain forlorn Italian woman, of whom Jane spoke to Mrs. Taylor, fares thither I believe today. She is *Beatrice*, but not related to Dante's. Such a mazed waif and stray, blown hither without a word in her

¹ On Mirabeau. See *post*, p. 133.

mouth, or a plan in her head, I have never in my life seen. Goethe's Pilgernde Thörrinn, stept out of the Novel into Reality ! May the good lady be able to do or devise something for her.

Shall I lend you Taylor's *Statesman* ? a most sufficient solid Dutch Book, of the sort it could be of.

Ever faithfully yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 38

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Friday morning [1st July, 1836].

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It was not till Saturday evening that I learned at secondhand thro' the Newspapers what stroke had fallen on you.¹ In the last days, and that very morning, I had been writing trivialities to you ; and your house was already the house of sorrow, and Time with its greatest was merged in Eternity !—I had understood that there was danger ; but not at all that it was imminent ; not even that you were clearly persuaded of it.

Your Father is gone,—to the ancient Fathers we had ; to God who made us all ! In such seasons I know well there are thoughts we cannot speak of, cannot bear to be spoken to about ; most mournful but also very solemn, not without a blessedness in them. One thing only will I say, in the words my Wife used : “ James Mill is gone ; but he has left a brave man's life behind him.” This, it seems to me, includes *all* ; the rest may remain unspoken : in silence, amid the sacred hopes and sacred tears, and mysteries and monitions, and lookings forward and lookings back, the pious heart will adjust itself when Nature

¹ James Mill died at Kensington on Thursday, the 23rd of June, 1836.

has had her due. I pray God, in old devout language that this sorrow may be *blessed* to you : I bid you, in the same spirit, Live worthy of such a Father. Let that be his elegy and monument. We linger but a little way behind him.

These two last evenings, tho' I knew not whether even my face could be other than burdensome to you, I was just on the road for Kensington, when unexpected interruptions occurred ; twice over ; last night just before your packet came. This evening, or tomorrow evening, I purpose again ; with some confidence, now that you permit and invite me.

My Wife is very poorly, and talks of going to Scotland for a month or two, to her Mother ; which I recommend. The hot weather keeps me in durance all days till after sunset.

Believe me ever

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 39

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Tuesday night [12th July, 1836].

MY DEAR MILL,

Jane went off for Scotland on Saturday evening ; there came a token from her today that she had got safe to Manchester, where Friends would be ready to receive her : tomorrow I hope to learn that she is in Liverpool with her Uncle ; and in a few days more, at home. I proposed your kind scheme to her, which she listened to with thankfulness ; but her heart was, by that time, set on Scotland, as I anticipated : indeed she had got so weakened and dispirited that I too had to admit her Mother's house was the best for her. Your Sister Clara repeats the

invitation in friendly manner tonight ; for which pray thank her in my name : it is a trouble which, had I done my duty to you, I should have spared her.

I like well the prospect of going with you on Saturday :¹ and yet I hope nothing does or will depend on it ; for my state is very unsure. I work all day, and awake occasionally at five or even at three in the morning ; I am so dreary of mood (like a ghost rather than like a man), and alive nowhere except over the paper, that it often seems quite foolish in me to think of going anywhere—if not into total abstraction from mankind, into some Diogenes' Herring-barrel, with not even the sun to shine on me. "A place where you can be as stupid and as ugly as you please" is in these circumstances an indispensable blessing. *C'est le grand bonheur de la vie*, said one of the Foreigners one day.—I shall hear of you before Saturday, and answer more precisely.

With this comes a handful of Scotch oatmeal. The grand rule for making porridge is brief : The highest possible temperature ; the meal introduced as nearly all at once as possible. That there be such rapidity of *stirring*, and such a beautiful effusion of the meal from the end of the hand as to preclude *lumps* and *knots*,—this lies in the nature of the case.

Heigho ! God grant us better days, my Friend ; or, what were equally good, a lighter heart to bear these with !—It is late ; and I ought to be asleep.

Good night !

T. CARLYLE.

¹ To Dorking, where Mill and his sisters had a small country house. Carlyle went, but not with Mill ; for there were *two* Dorking coaches that Saturday morning, and by accident Carlyle travelled in one and Mill and Grant in the other. They spent two or three days there, and came home together—parting at "The Elephant and Castle" in the London suburbs.

LETTER 40

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Friday night [22nd July, 1836].

MY DEAR MILL,

No surgeon can touch sore places with a softer hand than you do. I have read over your Paper repeatedly, and pencilled notes on it : I have waited these two days for a little leisure, above all for a fit humour to unroll the Article¹ again, and seek and decide. Neither the leisure nor the fit humour comes. I looked at some of the *Marginalia* the day they came, but not with a pen in my hand. That of *doomed*, I remembered not to have been right but also that at the moment I could not make it *righter* : there is an alteration here on a little slip, which you may introduce if you can find it. Also strike out the sentence of Danton you object to (and change the *audace* too if you like) ; so too of the line to which you say *si vous y tenez* : these two erasures will be improvements. I also noticed (I think) something you had changed about Saint-Simonism ; here too your pencilling seemed better than the pen-work. The rest I must leave you to manage yourself. Pray pardon me. It seems, to my sick feeling, as if I could not open that fatal MS. again for a guinea ; as if, should I once break the skin of it again, I should only by much pain make it *worse*.—My opinion of Dumont I think is not much different from yours ; certainly not hostile, not disrespectful : he had a better notion of Mirabeau than the world had at the time, yet very far from a just one ; and his *has* now become a kind of ridiculous one, and ought to pay the penalty of having arranged itself, even so far, on the

¹ *Mirabeau*, published, 1837, in the *London and Westminster Review*, No. 8. See Carlyle's *Miscellanies*, vol. v.

side of a little world against a great man. I feel, however, as if Dumont had got rather more than enough ; and, justice above all being the rule, I will help him if I can in anything. I keep your Paper and, when the Proofsheets come, will take what account of it is possible.

Indeed, if we have any business of this kind to do again, I imagine it will be better to leave it altogether for that joyful stage of the process : one is in spirits about the thing ; one's hand is *in*. Write down whatsoever thing you have to remark ; and let it lie before me *then*. I think I can say that there is no man whose remark I should feel more bound to consider in such a case. There is no man living of whose remark I should know so certainly beforehand these two important particulars : that it meant *something* and very clearly understood what it did mean ; also that it had taken the pains to understand *me*, and was, far beyond my deserts, generous and well-affected towards me.

As to my quarrel with the Nominative-and-verb, I do assure you it is one that I daily reflect on with great sorrow ; but it is not a quarrel of my seeking. I mean that the common English mode of writing has to do with what I call *hearsays* of things ; and the great business for me, in which alone I feel any comfort, is recording the *presence*, bodily concrete coloured presence of things ;—for which the Nominative-and verb, as I find it Here and Now, refuses to stand me in due stead. Hence our quarrel ; and separation, really an unblessed one ! I do believe, however, that I have not taken all I could have got from this poor Nominative-and-verb ; but I *will do it*—more and more as I grow wiser.

On the whole I am too much in the state the Scotch Pedlar thought the Londoners in : “A very good people, Ma’am, very clever people ; but *terribly aff for a LANGITCH.*”

Du Hausset is extremely entertaining. I have lost all my anger at poor Pompadour ; am full of compassion for her, of kindness towards her.

I know not what I have written here, only what I meant to write. I have been writing all day, and my eyes are half closed with sleep. Since I quitted you on Monday morning I have hardly spoken three words to any living creature.

Yours always,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 41

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Thursday morning [28th July, 1836].

MY DEAR MILL,

I dare say these arrangements about the *Mirabeau* will do perfectly well : if I once saw the Proofsheets, I should make short work of it. Can you, as the only other thing, leave orders with the Printer to give me a dozen perfect-Copies of the thing, so soon as we are all correct ?

If Fonblanque would give you that other Article,¹ now were the time for my revising it ; now when I have, in the vacation between two Chapters, a day or two of leisure.

La mort funeste de Carrel : this I had heard from Cavaignac ; but nothing more till your Letter came. That he died in miserable duel with a *miserable*, as you indicate, is a dreadfully aggravating circumstance. I suppose, such as he was, there is not his like left in France. And to die as a fool dieth !—It seems to me, as I tell you always, that France has pitiful destinies lying before it ; committed to the unknown ; and little Wisdom, Force or Worth anywhere discernible to front that with : its old game (with

¹ I.e. the *Histoire Parlementaire*.

the supreme *good-luck* which had been in that) flung up; and the new game to be played with such luck as there may be, with such wisdom as there may be!

John and I (for he came last Saturday) must try to make a pilgrimage to the India House tomorrow, to see you before you go.

We had a loud laugh at your paragraph, which I read him, about "payment" for the oatmeal. The estimated cost, I think, lies somewhere between twenty-pence and two shillings; but the accurate point *where*—this there is no Cambist in the world able to fix. *Unliquidated*, incapable of liquidation—till the Greek Kalends!

Believe me always

Faithfully yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 42

*T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, Post Restante, Nice.*¹

CHELSEA, LONDON,

9th October, 1836.

MY DEAR MILL,

Friend Grant has taken the trouble to bring me this sheet of Paper ready-folded, with the request that I would write a few words on it: he is "sure it will gratify you." Not to deprive you of even the chance of being gratified; at lowest, not to detain Grant's supplement any longer, I scribble as requested. I had not forgotten your own kind invitation as to writing: but there was almost no chance, at least till you formally challenged me by example and a Letter of your own, of my profiting by it. For these many months I have absolutely ceased corresponding with all persons; two only excepted: my Mother and

¹ Mill, being in poor health, was now taking a trip on the Continent.

my travelling Brother ; to each of whom I write, and that with difficulty, a mere domestic Bulletin some once in the month. What, in the present state of circumstances, known to you better than to most, could I write or say ? *Pauca verba*, Corporal Nym's Maxim, is the best. When there is nothing to be made of speaking, let a man hold his peace ; wait in silence what the dim Imbroglia will shape itself to. Surely to something *good* ! Better days are coming for us all. In the meanwhile, accept with your old friendliness, the present quasi-*mute* sign of vitality and remembrance ; and consider it as a speech *intended* to be spoken.

There has fallen out almost nothing new with me since you went. I have been as sickly as heretofore ; have sprawled along in my course of work as heretofore. With very poor progress, yet still with progress. I have my *Girondins* not far from their Arrest and Calvados ; nay, not very far from their Guillotine and the Caves of Saint-Emilien. After which there are but some three brief Chapters, which must not in all exceed sixty pages ! Then *vivat* ! On the whole I am sick of the Girondins. To confess a truth, I find them extremely like our present set of respectable Radical Members. There is the same cold, clean-washed, patronising talk about "the masses" (a word, expressive of a thing, which I greatly hate) ; the same Formalism, hide-bound Pedantry, superficiality, narrowness, barrenness. I find that the Mountain was perfectly under the necessity of flinging such a set of men to the Devil ; whither also, I doubt not, *our* set will go, tho' I hope in a milder manner, our motion not being of that so extremely *rapid* kind.—In a word, I have engaged to begin Printing on or before Newyearsday ; and can hope to have my hands washed of the thing some time in the month of March. O, that day when I send you back your Books with thanks and the Three Volumes

among them,—it will be a day to be marked with chalk, whatever the morrow of it prove !

Another piece of very minute literary news will give you pleasure : that they are going to print that *Diamond Necklace* ; which accordingly, if the humour still hold, you may have a stroke at in the way of reviewing ! Fraser, whom I saw the other day, finds now, that it will suit him very well, &c. ; and means to have it promulgated in that elegant vehicle of his, some time between this and March. He himself is to judge when ; Cavaignac, who was reading the thing, engaged to give it him this day ; with a blessing. Fraser made another very singular proposal ; which I declined : that of publishing the whole Revolution Book in successive slips in his Magazine.—I believe there has not been since the subsidence of Deucalion's Deluge any quagmire and mud-slough of Despond of such curious properties, accidents, antecedents and consequents, as this of British Literature at the date we now write. Which, therefore, let us quit altogether for the present,—mindful of Corporal Nym.

My Brother went away about a fortnight after you ; and my Wife returned some three days after he was gone. She had fared miserably ill in Scotland, and worse than ever ; but has, notwithstanding, reaped very considerable benefit from the journey ; and grown better a great deal since her return. It is thus with journeys ; especially flights out of London. There is a violent disruption of the old courses and habits ; which may even prove aggravating while it lasts ; but, once over, it is found to have *reposed* the worn organs, perhaps dissipated altogether many an old distress ; and on the whole yielded benefit. This, I think, will also be the way with you. None but your last Letter speaks of much present improvement : but at worst of all, we will still hope in *home* when it comes to that. Avoid painful thoughts and

cares ; know the virtue of *idleness*, for it really is a virtue, which some want. For the rest, never be discouraged by pain : you do not yet know what a fund of Life there is in one ; what long corrosions one can stand, and not be worn *thro'* with them ; nay *be* worn purer and clearer by them, and see them one day as indispensable blessings !—While on this subject of your travel, I ask myself, Whether it were still impossible that Brother John and you might meet ? To him it would give real pleasure. The nearest I know of his motions is, that not improbably he will pass near you somewhere, on the way from Geneva to Marseilles towards Italy. His present address is “ Countess of Clare’s, Hôtel des Bergues, à Genève ” ; which I suppose would carry a Letter even *after* him, if so were he chanced to intersect you anywhere.

Poor Grant will get almost no good of this sheet ;—it will teach him to play such tricks again ! However, I must end, lest I provoke him utterly. There are some news ; but almost none worth writing. I met three of your Sisters in Piccadilly one day last week, in a pouring rain : there was Miss Mill, and the one *like* Miss Mill, and my little Latinist who was surveying Polyhedrons at Mitcham. All was well in your household ; the new habitation in Kensington Square doing very well, of which I got the Number.—John Sterling is at a place called *Belsito* near Bordeaux, a beautiful residence and neighbourhood ; where, as I hear yesterday, he seems now to *give up* thoughts of Madeira for the winter : a thing I am very glad of. Mrs. Austin you doubtless have heard of ; perhaps even seen. She must be at Malta I think : Lewis came athwart me once again, before their departure ; a very solid, estimable kind of man. Taylor is going to write new tragedies.—Enough, enough ! Pardon me, my dear Grant.—Adieu, my dear Mill ! Write if you

will have me write. Come soon back to us and well. Writing, or not writing, accept my friendliest wishes, and blessing.

T. CARLYLE.

Mr. Grant finishes the Letter. He begins : " Dear Mill, Carlyle was to write you a few lines, and you see what he has done ! " [Filled, to wit, about three-quarters of the sheet !]

LETTER 43

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Friday [November or December, 1836].

MY DEAR MILL,

The seemingly subdued cold I had that day you saw me, rallied next day, thro' my imprudence ; became worse than ever ; and was only beaten back to its old distance, with difficulty and time. Yesterday's was my first venture out : today, in the frost-fog, I must sit still.—The *Diamond Necklace* is to be printed *entire*, this month, I think. The rest of my work makes rather shabby progress, in present circumstances.

Poor Cavaignac has had a heavy misfortune : a beloved Sister, quite unexpectedly to him, is just dead ; his Mother left alone, and he held captive. I have not seen him ; he writes me a Note of grim brevity : the poor Sister, she was here in Autumn, was a person one remembered. I am very sorry for them all. The Mother, it seems, is coming over hither ; to live here.

Can you, without much trouble, get me a frank for the enclosed ? It has lain imprisoned, with myself, these four days ; my Frankers are inaccessible to me,

so long as frost-fog and faceache hold,—ill-matched pair !

How does your head stand it ? Shall I not see you soon ?

Ever faithfully yours,
T. CARLYLE.

I break seal to say that Leigh Hunt is extremely willing to write ; and will produce a *list of subjects* forthwith. The thing he seemed to regard as most promising, at the time we spoke, was a Review of some new Edition, which Lord Wharncliffe is bringing out, of *Lady Mary Wortley Montague*. He would stand by that, if you liked it. He knows all the period, so far as Books can teach one ; and is fond of what lies in it. In fact I know not what Hunt would deliberately undertake that he would not render worth reading. His *peculiar* views he *volunteers* to keep entirely out of sight. I should say, Try him. You should see him, and fix on the best *kind* of trial.

LETTER 44

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Thursday [8th December, 1836].

MY DEAR MILL,

It is perhaps the briefest way, my haste being great, to *send* you this Note of Hunt's. He seems to persist in *Wortley* as the decidedly best, and makes out no other List. He understands that you can get him a loan of the Book from the Publisher, who is Bentley. My notion is that you should indulge him ; that he will make you a very pretty Article on *Wortley*. The beckoning of one's own inward wish is generally the best of all indications. For the rest, would it not be well that you saw Hunt ? Or is that

superfluous? He is accessible, I believe, almost any evening that you like,—and close by me.

Cavaignac and Marast came; C. looking a little less sorrowful than on Sunday. He did not appoint any other night; but will be back soon; and you shall have warning. It is a wild matter Death; to a man of his *Credo*.

I had appointed with Falconer to get me Twelve (or was it Twenty?) clear copies of the Article *Mirabeau*. Would it interfere with you much to have, at least Four of them, ready *at Christmas*, or the day after, for me? I want to send them into Scotland; and have no method except by the Magazines (thro' Simpkin & Marshall), which of course are all underway by the time a Number by the regular course can reach me here.

Basta: for I am in great haste.

Ever yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 45

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Monday [9th January, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

There had nothing come to Fraser's, on Saturday night, when I went to enquire: the Review had come hither in the interim. I begin now to suppose that these *copies*¹ have never been printed. Perhaps four, or three, were still procurable from the waste sheets still lingering in the Printing office? If not, let them go,—and *not* take our good humour with them. We will mention them no more.

Leigh Hunt, whenever I saw him, for the last fortnight or more, was in a flutter of joyful expectancy about his *Wortley*: he is now grown quite *monosyllabic*,

¹ Of his article *Mirabeau*, which he had asked the printer to strike off before the magazine types were distributed.

my Wife tells me ; the thing having never come.¹ It is a great pity that errors of *this* kind should be committed ; which can be so easily avoided ; which do more mischief than one is apt to imagine. The avoiding of them not only costs no labour but saves labour, a little tincture of method being introduced, and sluggishness flung out. I learn with satisfaction that you have it in view to change your *Personnel* : the Printer also (Printer's Foreman) seems a great blockhead ; makes the ugliest errors, on the whole the most sluttish printing I have seen.

Molesworth's Article pleases me very considerably. It has a sound spirit in it ; resolute, temperate, quiet. Napier is strong, but a little savage or so : he does not grow with me so fast as I could wish, the more I learn of him. The Poor-Law Fallacy I cannot read. *Latrobe* is very good in its kind. The *Cloister and Crowd* I like best ; indeed, I stared in surprise at it, till I saw the signature "A."² *Mirabeau* has got so disgusting to me, that I cannot bear to look into it ; can pray only never to hear more word of it in this world. I have no doubt of its success with Review-readers,—so far as is necessary.

You shall have the sheets of that Book³ ; I will arrange How with Fraser when I see him ; who will doubtless rejoice to have such a proposal made to him. The first sheet has not yet come. I have still *two days* of writing ; and *then* ! By the bye, have you an *O'Meara* among your Books ? If you have not, do not in the least mind it. I can get what I want from it, by a journey to the Museum ; which perhaps at any rate is the shortest method.—I mean to come and ransack your Bookshelves for amusing Books, while this *correcting of the Press* goes on. Not many weeks hence, and by God's blessing, you shall have

¹ I.e. the book from Bentley.

² Mill's *nom de plume* at this time.

³ The *French Revolution*, which Mill was to review, Fraser sending him the sheets as early as possible.

1837]

CARLYLE'S LETTERS TO

all back again, and this Despicability in three volumes along with them.

Ever faithfully yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 46

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Tuesday morning [24th January, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

The enclosed Note, given me on Saturday by Cavaignac, with vehement request to *appuyer* the prayer of it, I meant to give you on Sunday. I do not know much, or any more, about it than what itself says ; except that Cavaignac takes great interest in it, and will feel much obliged if you can forward what he wishes. The poor *Echappé*, it seems, is quite *demoralised* (as they call dispirited), tho' otherwise a *brave garçon* and good dyer of wool. They seem to think, you, by your influence in the way they mention, could contrive to get him put on trial as a workman : if he be not found fit, they will make a *collecte* and have him taught. Whether you can do anything in such a business I know not. I assured Cavaignac that your own charities would lead you to do what you could. If the man *can* dye, he need not, in a country of woollen clothing, *die* for want of *dyeing*. (I am growing Thomas Hood-ish.)—Cavaignac's own address is 1 Tavistock Row, Covent Garden.

I have not surrendered to this influenza, tho' it incessantly besieges me. My Wife has been, and is, very ill of it. By your walking last Sunday, I inferred you were getting better. Thank Heaven, there is a little semblance of blue here and there in the sky today.

Yours always faithfully,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 47

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Saturday [28th January, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

I have forwarded your answer to Cavaignac : it is my notion that Caille ought to try that dyeing of leather, since no better is. If they think so, they will communicate with Grant about it.

Here is a copy of the *Necklace* ; which I wish you good of. Fraser has given me two dozen made up in this manner. "The Country Newspapers," he says, are in the greatest indignation.

If I had the copies of *Mirabeau* now, I could still find an opportunity of sending them off. They are for Scotland mainly ; two are for America : I have promised them long ago ; but can easily *explain*, if impossibility have intervened.

Neither, in the other case, let your Printer hurry himself ; shifting his types before the time. Whether he may be able to correct these *Errata* marked on the accompanying piece of paper I know not ; nor is that either of much moment : however, I have marked them, and will give him a chance. The little paragraph to fill up the *hiatus* of Mirabeau's Hunt where the Extract was cut out, is the second I have composed for that end. The first was not fixed on with wafer : indeed it was left with the Editor either to insert that, or replace the Extract, as might suit his space best ; —so it went the way of all paper ; and the *hiatus* fell together as it could.

At the rate our Printer travels at, there seems to me small prospect that the *French Revolution* can be ready for your next Number. Perhaps it will answer me still better,—to have a friend lying back a little, to silence marauders ? Or perhaps it may

not answer so well. I cannot guide it ; need not take charge of it. The *third* sheet is still lying on the Mantelpiece here with " To Press " only *marked* on it. Fraser has set a second Printer to work, on a separate volume ; and talks of setting a third on, if need be. I have been very heavy hitherto with corrections : but the worst of that is over now.

You never received the *Dulaure* ; which must have surprised you. I forgot to speak of it last time. The case was, I found *no* paper of references in *Dulaure* ; and his index being so extensive and complete, there is for the present considerable service to me in him. As your friend has hitherto been so good, he will perhaps continue it a few weeks longer. If not, let me know ; and I will give up, as in duty bound. Nay, indeed I can do it without excessive sacrifice. The thing stands as I say.

Before " taking one's rifle for the backwoods of America," it is proper that one *search* the ground accurately as he goes, and exhaust the resources *it* offers. To myself this project of Lecturing on German Literature in the Albemarle Street Institution, does not seem to promise much : but some of my friends are amazingly fond of it. I have not yet succeeded in ascertaining two essential *preliminaries* : 1st, *What* my success in it might probably amount to : 2nd, what the difficulties are, what the means are of getting it *tried*. Perhaps the Mr. Singer you mentioned could without much trouble enlighten me on these ? I should then see whether it was worth while to stir, yea or no.

As you take an interest in *Teufelsdröckh*, it will be good news to hear that they are printing a second edition of him in America ;—of 1000, the first having been only 500. I even heard some whisper of an Edition coming out here by and by. But as it unfortunately will never produce one pipe of tobacco in the way of advantage, but on the contrary will only

confuse my already confused head still farther with foolish babblement and clatterment,—it seems to be some other man's charge than mine.

I forget what lions and lionesses I saw very lately. I am sick of body, not healthy of mind ; and desire above all things that I were covered under a tub.

Yours always,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 48

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Wednesday night [22nd February, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

Two days ago I undertook to write to you about that Article of Hunt's : I have not had time till now.

Hunt has carefully studied his *Lady Mary* ; has marked it and meditated it ; but not yet put pen to paper. It is of considerable moment to him that he get published this Number (at least that he get *paid* this Number). I told him my impression was that your rule did not admit of anything being given in to the Printer after the 19th of March. Hunt can be ready at the 12th of March : at the 1st of March he cannot be ready. His Article he cannot yet guess at in regard to the number of pages ; but he thinks it will not be a short Article ; —it shall not be longer than there is good interesting stuff to carry him.

On these data I write to you, that taking them into estimate, and predicting from them, you may help, so far as possible, to spare the worthy man some disappointment,—which lying unprinted always is, and will be to him more than to another. His address is 4 Upper Cheyne Row, Chelsea. Shall he get ready for the 12th, with some assurance that you will be ready for him then ? Or were it better that he delayed altogether till next Number ?

If you do not like writing to him, write to me, and I will communicate it.

The sheets of the first volume of that *F.R.* will probably be ready for you in about a fortnight : surely not sooner. Our second Printer has not "the identical sort of type," etc., etc. : I have not seen the mark of his existence yet.

The copies of *Mirabeau* had come about the time you wrote, tho' I could not get to see for some days after, and they were not sent hither. They were just in the right season ; a baker's-dozen of them : they are now all travelling on their various highways,—and we happily have done with them.

I went to Hume's commemoration of "Scotch Martyrs" at the Crown and Anchor ; being urged by Cavaignac and Company. Nothing like it has come across me. Cold, unfruitful, dead and low—as the Bog of Allen ! *C'est de la dernière platitude.* Let me be forgotten forever rather than remembered in that manner. I came away before Warburton had got half-way.

I have not Influenza but a kind of subaltern perennial-looking cold.

Yours always,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 49

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Saturday [11th March, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

The sentence you deprecate shall disappear, root and branch, and never return.¹

On the other hand, I must totally dissent from Falconer and you so far as you go with him, in regard

¹ Some sentence in Carlyle's short article entitled *Histoire Parlementaire*, which was now to appear in the *London and Westminster Review*.

to that of the Jacobins' solemnity. It remains lively in my head, as one of the cheerfullest passages I met with in the whole *Histoire Parlementaire*. It is burlesque ; but ought it not to be so ? The Jacobins' Society and their doings are not sublime to any man in England ; to any man in the world, out of a small French clique. Intrinsically, and as it seems to me in final *reality*, they are a mixture of truculence, audacity and absurdity, not *without* something of sublimity at the heart of it ; which something, if the English are ever to get at it, *this* vehicle, of banter and bluster, may sooner than another be the means of conveying to them.

And now, after this vigorous protest, I leave you king and master of the passage, to do with it as you will. Nay farther I have to beg as a special kindness that you will not let me see the thing at all till I read it beatified into clear print ; but that you will yourself correct the Proof ; doing it in a kind, brotherly manner ; but above all *doing* it,—my hurry and confusion in these days is so great.

My Wife crows over me at the oracle Macrone has spoken. It is a new thing in Israel.

I have sent your message to Hunt ; and advise him to send over his Article, if it be ready, to your house at Kensington this very night.

Tomorrow, if I saw you about midday, we could have a walk for an hour.

Good be with you !

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 50

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Wednesday [early in April, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

The whole of the First Volume of the *F.R.* has now been in type for two or three days ; I have

got some ten sheets of it perfect ; and shall get the remaining four or five in the course of the week. These, with three or at most four, of the *Third* Volume (by the other Printer), are all I yet have. A Proof-sheet or two of the *Feast of Pikes* (Vol. II.) may also perhaps be attainable in the course of the week ; but *perhaps* only. That is where we are.

I suppose therefore, it will now be necessary for you to decide on *not* reviewing the Book for this Number. If you decide *otherwise*, let me know ; and I will forthwith set about doing the needful.

It has been decided, in spite of Mr. Singer's ill success, that I am still to lecture ! In Willis's Rooms ; to begin with May ; six Lectures ; on my own footing. God only knows how I shall get through it, in the hurry I am in ; in the health I am in. But I must try ; I have long had a thought of trying. I am, on the whole, got beyond fear, of anything. So soon as these Syllabuses or Prospectuses they are printing come into my hands, I will send you one or two of them.

In spite of my atrabiliar humours, I like the Book considerably better, as it goes on, in the printed state. It is not wholly a worthless Book ; neither can it be wholly ignored forever. There will be men in England that will say *Yes* here and there ; and innumerable men and quasi-men that will most unmusically *shriek*, and endeavour to say, *No, No*. As I told my Brother once, when he remonstrated with me : “ Jack, there are some ten millions of men in this Island, who generation after generation spend their lives in *supporting* Conventionalities and Quackeries of one sort or the other,—why should there not once be one man who spent his life (were it his *life* even) in declaring openly to whatsoever quackhood he met, Behold thou art a quackhood ! ”—Such a Book is *awful* : it is itself like a kind of French Revolution,—in its way !

God bless you !

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 51

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,
Monday night [April, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

Herewith I send you ten Prospectuses of that amazing Course of Lectures of mine.¹ One will suffice for yourself; but according as you have opportunity, you may leave the other nine with such persons as you think them likely to concern. How the others, for they have 500 of them, are getting distributed I do not very specially know: but your section of the world, I think, must be nearly unvisited by them. If you can make use of more than ten, I suppose I can easily get you more. It is Miss Wilson and her Brother whom you once saw here; they, with Taylor chiefly, that are setting afoot this thing: one of the conditions of it is that I am not to hear a word of the business till the people are all met, we suppose three score or so, in Willis's Rooms.

I tremble to the very bone to think of it. For the Lectures are to be Speeches, that is one of the conditions; farther I have not, with Printers' devils and *etceteras*, a single moment to study them: you can fancy! But it is a thing I have long wanted to try; nay, a thing internally that, under certain conditions, I have a considerable notion I could do. So, sick and jaded and exasperated and hurried; in this and not in another state of readiness, what can I do but try. It is like a man taken by neck and heels and flung overboard, and bid swim or drown. *Ora pro me!*

The first day I have an hour's leisure I must be

¹ On German Literature.

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CARLYLE'S LETTERS TO

eastward in your region ; and hope to make a clutch at the India House.

Yours always affectionately,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 52

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,
Thursday [27th April, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

I have this moment got the last *Revise* of that unblest Book off my hands ; and reckon myself to have now done with it forevermore. The Bookseller has orders to send you the first copy he can get bound. I suppose you will get it at the India House one of these days. He, poor man, is in great trepidation, I think ; I, like Attila Schmelzle, wait *unbeschreiblich ruhig*, "with unspeakable composure."—There remain two days in which to prepare for that sublime Course of Lectures. The outcome of that is one of the chief mysteries of Fate in these weeks.

Your Books will revisit their shelves, so soon as I can find an hour to pack them. The Carrier, I suppose, must take them by instalments. It seems as if one horse could hardly draw them all, much less one box hold them. We shall see.

A new *Guide* Newspaper has come over to me from Hunt. Garnier, who was here, tells me it is by Cole and a Company of you. *Faustum sit!* The Newspaper looks well enough.

I hope to see more of you, and of all men, were these Lectures over.

Ever faithfully yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 53

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Friday night [end of May, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

I know not how to accept this valuable gift of *Biographie Universelle*, nor how to refuse it; I am very much obliged to you; and will, as I have long done, account you my *Book-Providence*. No man was ever more munificent in that kind. I thank you again and again.

There was for some time a regular List kept of the Books I got; but the arrivals afterwards became numerous, and the List did not attempt to keep pace with them. I send it you such as it is. I think you have got what there were pretty completely. But there is to be a general jail-delivery in that kind here; and whatever of yours farther may turn up shall be sent. I hope you will get your Book (*New Book*) soon.¹

I sent off *Dulaure* yesternight by the Omnibus.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 54

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

SCOTSBRIG, ECCLEFECHAN,

18th July, 1837.

MY DEAR MILL,

An obliging neighbour had, on failure of the Simpkin & Marshall conveyance, sent me up your Review from Annan: on Friday last the copy intended for me, with your Letter in it, got to hand, by way of Edinburgh. My Wife says, "He did not

¹ "Your New Book" was, of course, Mill's presentation copy of the *French Revolution*, which, as Carlyle says in his Journal, "came out about the first of June."

send it to *me*, the careless wretch";—but seems nevertheless to have made good amends, in an oblique way. Indisputably the careless wretch has gratified all friends of mine.

No man, I think, need wish to be better reviewed. You have said openly of my poor Book what I durst not myself dream of it, but should have liked to dream had I dared. It is a courageous Article; carries its right to speak on the face of it; and speaks *so*. Innumerable dissonant small-deer of Newspaper columns might feel the wind struck out of them thereby and keep silence or change their note. What good a criticism can do to a Book, may be considered as done. To a Book, or to an Author: for I have literally not read any other criticism at all, and even heard little of them; and consider myself well off indeed. Jane reports to me of Heraud quite as you do, "A shrill sound of Glory to Heraud in the Highest," which forced her to break down in the middle without likelihood of resuming. . . . On the whole, I find it to be a very sad thing this of writing Books.¹ I can very well understand how old Clergymen and such like, as I have known them, after working for forty years at some Commentary on the Revelation, have finished it, and then in a few weeks gone mad, and died. As for me, I do not mean to do that; but, on the whole, I find no health except in driving the useless rubbish and all that is said of it, as much as possible out of my head. Half a dozen reviews like yours even, would tend to do me incalculable mischief: I should have to say, as the Dumfries weaver did when they made him Deacon of the weavers, and drank his health, "Gentlemen, consider that I am still but a man." If one knew where on Earth or under it there was Rest to be had,—O, Rest, Rest!—one would fly thither and stay there.

¹ The *French Revolution* was the first book to which Carlyle put his name as author.

I like the rest of this Review Number tolerably well. Bulwer does what he can ; in the right direction ; and, as you said, " more than one expects." There is nothing absolutely false or bad that one falls in with in any of the Articles. Buller on the Pickwick business surprised me by speaking of Smollett ; I fear that is loose speaking, but I have sent for the Pickwick on the faith of it, and will see. An intelligent kind of youth in Dumfries expressed his amazement that "*this Review*," as he reverently named it, had taken notice of Pickwick at all. I wish you would get Sterling to do something, if you could find the fit thing. This is not *right* Radicalism yet ; tho' indeed what in the world is right ! There is no right Radical in the Company if it be not yourself, and perhaps still more *myself*. "*Je ne trouve personne que moi qui a toujours raison ; faut avouer, ma chère,*" said the Duchess de la Ferté ! "*personne que moi !*" Occasionally-erroneous Radicalism, like other things, must struggle on. By the bye, does not Fonblanque, too, seem to *have* culminated ? I find no free fighter for the truth in him, so much as a soldado for the Durham-and-Melbourne concern. Has he *got* what he could carry, then ? Every man has his limits : Hitherto shalt thou come ; so much of evil and of good fortune shalt thou stand unlamed, but no more ! As the Scotch Preachers say : " I hope better things, tho' I thus speak."

It gives me real satisfaction to learn that you will publish a Book. It seems impossible that you should publish on any subject, however artificial, without illustrating innumerable things that are natural and perennial ; of interest to all sincere men. In writing a Book you will get far more of your general mind uttered than in a series of Articles of equal length. I will read your Treatise on Logic with an attentive expectation which no other man's could give me ; nor all other men's on a matter I am growing so

estranged from. If we had a week's time to talk, there were much to be said of Logic between us ! I call it the "Art of telling other men *what* you believe." Whether our Aristotle fashion of it is, in *any* province except Euclid's Geometry, the best or even the good method : herein I suspect we should have many things to argue. But in the meanwhile write, I beg earnestly ; write, print, and let me read. To get thoroughly master of a subject ; or even, if it so prove (as with me and French Revolution perhaps), to deliver oneself altogether from it, there is no plan like writing a Book on it. At any rate, what rule has one except to write on the thing he knows about, and has somewhat to say about ?

I can give you no account of my doings here ; for in very truth they are a *Do-nothing*. I lounge about the green places, look at the waving of the trees, the gushing of the clear *burns* ; myself the placidest, saddest of men. Nothing more *ghost-like*, I fancy, dwells on the Earth at present. It is a sadness not the painfullest, yet, I do think, the deepest I have ever known in the world. Yet I feel it to be healthy, the natural return to a kind of health. In Time and Silence, surely I shall grow better. All speech, (if it be not the voice of the Solway tide-waves or of the Summer winds, is more or less an offence to me. I could say with Job : Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends ! Or better it might be : Have patience with me, have patience with me.

My dear Mill, this is not worth twopence, this Letter, and I have not a frank in this time of dissolution. Put up with it, I pray you ; in hope of improved times. The Good Heavens will be merciful to one. Take my thanks, hearty as they well may be, for all the good I have got of you, first and last. Pity me, farewell, and love me.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 55

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

SCOTSBRIG, ECCLEFECHAN,
10th August, 1837.

MY DEAR MILL,

Your Letter,¹ which I remember well, does almost indubitably exist, safe in some repository about Chelsea ; but so far as I can see, it will be impossible to get hold of it, at least for some four weeks. My Wife, who has charge of all these things, is just gone with the Sterlings to Malvern : I do not, till she write again, yet know her precise address ; but I fear at any rate there would be little use in applying to her ; for the thing will be locked up somewhere, in some involution of security penetrable only to herself. It is very unlucky. I remember you spoke of Carrel's air of sincerity, of his precise determinate character, of a certain mild tone of dogmatism noticeable in his manner (like me, you said) ; for the rest, how *practical* he was, exclusively devoted to his *Métier de journaliste*, so unlike the speculative Cavaignac and other Frenchmen in this respect. On the whole you gave me pretty much the notion of him that his medal did when I looked at it long afterwards. I do not think there was very much more in your account than I have here given. I doubt it will be all that we can recover for the present.

Your Letter has just come to hand at this late hour of eleven p.m. ; and as I am bound for Nithsdale tomorrow early, not to return for two days, I write you this in great haste, rather than write nothing for so long.

¹ The letter referred to was Mill's to Carlyle, dated 25th November, 1833, a letter of extraordinary length (nine pages foolscap) describing his trip to Paris. It was returned to Mill and kept by him. Carlyle's *résumé*, given above, is, so far as it goes, perfectly correct.

I rejoice to hear that the Book prospers according to your mind. Go on *getrosten Muthes*. We shall see where we differ, as you say ; and find, I doubt not, that there is a very broad ground of agreement between us, if we go deep enough to seek it. I suspect our present difference is a partially accidental one, originating in a twist of my own. I am conscious of a kind of semi-unreasonable aversion to *spectacles* altogether, of a kind of practical unbelief in spectacles. Multiplied errors that had well nigh killed me (this is literal truth) got into my head by spectacles ; on dashing the spectacles off, I found that it was all false, and that I was still alive. On the other hand, hardly any truth that I set much store by has happened to come to me by way of spectacles. Hence my feeling that way in part. Nevertheless I know withal that there are or might be spectacles. I am curious to hear what *you* say they should be, and how one may help his eyesight with them ; I will read you even with interest and profit.

The *Times* critique[†] did get hither ; it is a helpful friendly sort of thing. I cannot get the Book swept out of my head nearly so clean as I should wish. What good is now in it for me ? But the Future is all so blank, really aimless (so far as this world goes) and as it were both hopeless and fearless, one turns into the Past and fractions of it cling to one. I look upon the curse of all curses that man bears in this world to be self-conceit : how often does one cry bitterly to be delivered from it ; and yet it is ineradicable ; cut it down as you will, or as others will for you, it springs eternal. The Mythus of Lucifer is one of the wisest ever conceived. *Ach Gott !*

My Brother brings news from the village how there is a talk of Sir James Graham's coming over to this County, Hope Johnstone (just elected amid

[†] Thackeray's review of the *French Revolution*.

hisses) resigning in his favour ; how, in that case, Ewart of Liverpool will be started against him, and an immense explosion will take place. Poor Sir James has got himself beaten in Cumberland as well as heart could wish. He would have stout resistance here too : but we have no statesmen (estatesmen) as Cumberland has ; and Buccleuch's tenants are all at rack-rent. Whether Ewart or Sir James be intrinsically the shabbier mortal, one would not undertake to say. I will tell M'Diarmid tomorrow to propose Perronnet Thomson, I think. Sir James's defeat yielded me a perceptible pleasure ; and yet now, poor fellow, I am almost sorry for him, so signal was it.

When I leave this solitude, is not certain ; but perhaps it will not be many weeks. I was thinking of Switzerland, had my Brother been returning ; however, he now writes me that that is unlikely. I feel decidedly better, tho' sad as ever. A Letter from you, especially a long thick-written Letter, will be very gratifying, if your time allow. Good night, my dear Mill.

Yours always,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 56

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHelsea,
30th October, 1837.

MY DEAR MILL,

Mr. Robertson and I have met twice or oftener : I find him a young man of sense and energy, good-natured, and well-intentioned ; I discern or augur much worth in him ; I like especially the honest *laugh* he has. "Laughter," says Teufelsdröckh, "is the cipher-key of the whole man." Whatsoever

in years or experience this Editor of yours may want, he is of course daily getting added.

He has sent me *Scott* long since, which I have attentively read ; and seems very anxious that I should write upon it for next Number. It is a small enterprise ; upon which, or rather upon the thing involved in it and connected with it, I am now, according to agreement, to take *your* decision. For the question with me is not, *Scott* or no *Scott*, but, To review or not to review ? As to which there were very many things I could say to you in fit mood and circumstance : here, however, I will restrict myself to the essential.

Doubtless I have often told you how the Editorial world found it convenient to deal with me some five or six years ago. Today, work, work in breathless superfluity ; tomorrow, whistled down the wind, left to go and die, if you like, you know not for what ! It is one of the damnablest positions a man can find himself in. After some reflection, I have resolved not to get into it again. I think I either ought to make some engagement of some permanence, we will say for a year ; or not to intermeddle with the Periodical concern farther at all.

The thing I want to ask you therefore is, contrasting honestly in your mind my capabilities with the wants of your Enterprise, what is the utmost amount of employment (I mean money-amount, at so much per page, or otherwise reckoned on what principle you liked) your Review could afford me, say, from this December 1837 till the same date of 1838 ? That is the first of all questions. If (which is very likely) you can promise *nothing*, this Article only, and the rest on peradventure,—then my decision must be also, at least till there come something pressing me for utterance thro' this vehicle more than another, nothing. At present nothing presses me, nor is like to do it. God knows how

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much has already sunk into the dreariest frozen quiescence, for want of some right vehicle of utterance ; much that might perhaps still be resuscitated, were it encouraged ; which, in a little time more, will not be capable even of that ! On the whole, I have got a good piece of my mind uttered ; and ought now to look about me whether I cannot find something to live upon withal. Nay this, by the great mercy of Heaven, is not such a problem as it once was with me here.

If, on the other hand, you answer Something ; and your *maximum* of wages will meet my *minimum* of necessities, then I will joyfully say *Done*, and set myself forthwith to perform, to see on what terms performance may be possible, may be useful and pleasant for all of us. I have that faith in Robertson and in his *laugh*, that I think we could go on lovingly. My whole tendencies, you long since know, are analogous enough to your own. My depth of Radicalism goes on without abatement ; my aversion to Benthamism, to all Formalism, and indeed, I am sorry to add, to many hollow Formalists, with their barren jangling, their bigotry, vanity and “ vociferous platitude,” who call themselves Radicals, has sensibly increased on nearer acquaintance. Farther, I should desire, indeed I should need, to have, if not my own choice of subjects, yet something very like that ; also, I doubt if I could stand much *editing* ! Yet withal I am not a wild Orson, but a tame reasonable man, who longs above all things and aims henceforth to act not reasonably only but with a practical view.—These are difficulties ; which on the whole we will look at more straitly, and see how to *conquer*, when your decision shall say they need to be *fronted*.

And now, my dear Mill, I will beg only one other thing of you : that you meditate this question not as my Friend but as the Manager of your own Review ;

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CARLYLE'S LETTERS TO

this with all freedom and singleness of view. It is really much the same to me how you decide. Important it will be this Yes or No of yours ; but whether the No will be good for me or the Yes will, I am content to leave to the Powers.

Believe me ever,

Yours heartily,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 57

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Friday morning [10th November, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

Here is the Letter you consented to take charge of. The scratch of an Honourable Member's pen will make a heart glad on the morrow this time ; more than can be always said of Members' pens.

In reference to what was talked of yesterday, I answer that for the present it seems to me that I must *do* this Life of Scott, and leave the rest to take what settlement it can. Pray send me the First Volume therefore ; I have all the rest hitherto published : I mean to begin on Monday morning.—If you chanced to fall into any possibility of getting me those Books of Crockett's, they would be very welcome to me ; I am not sure but something good might be made of them.

Pray come back soon, and let us have some speech ; there pass many days without one day in them so good as yesterday. Wherefore ? Therefore !

Ever faithfully,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 58

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Friday [8th December, 1837].

MY DEAR MILL,

Yesterday I gave Robertson the thing on Scott : very bad. I never was so confused, deaf, stupid, and entirely desirous to hold my peace.

Perhaps you can get me this other *Roman* Letter franked ? The American Letter you must give to Friend Grant ; who will go over with it to the proper American Coffee House. You or he will also be obliged to advance twopence for me (payable long after date) on account of it. Obliging young men, as you are.

I was sorry the Theatre had taken me out that night. Perhaps you will come back before long.

This Emerson proves to be a very notable man. There is an "Oration" of his come over, which you will read with astonishment. I have no copy of it myself yet ; but you are one that should read it.

Ever faithfully,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 59

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

[CHELSEA,

January, 1838.]

MY DEAR MILL,

Unluckily or luckily this notion of writing on the working classes has in the interim died away in me ; and I have altogether lost it for the present. I have got upon Thucydides, Johannes Müller, the Crusades, and a whole course of objects connected with my Lectures ; sufficient to occupy me abundantly

till that fatal time come. We will commit my Discourse on the working classes, once more, to the chapter of chances.

I do not know that my train of argument would have specially led me to insist on the question you allude to ; but if it had—! In fact it were a right cheerful thing for me could I get to see that general *improvement* were going on there ; and, I think, I should in that case, wash my hands of Radicalism forever and a day. Ah me, it is a bitter mockery to talk of “improvement” to the men I have known ! Ebenezer Elliot is with me ; Machinery, and Population increasing 1200 a-day, are with me. Francis Place is against me, a man entitled to be heard. As to “Commissioners” and their evidence, I do verily take it all to be worth almost nothing in that matter ; your answer is according to your question, and your questionee,—“as the fool thinks the bell clinks,” and all things whatsoever can be demonstrated if you choose your man.

Have you got Michaud's *Histoire des Crusades*, or any likely Book on that subject ? I fear you have not a Voss's *Homer* ? I must come and ransack your Bookshelves again some day.

Believe me faithfully yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 60

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Monday [Spring, 1838].

MY DEAR MILL,

I have been out at Windsor since I saw you ; and have got myself so *boiled* in omnibuses, so frozen in East winds, and on the whole so shattered by want of sleep, excitement and the other mischances of locomotion, that I must not think of stirring from

the spot again, at least till these Lectures¹ of mine are over. I pray you say for me, at Keston, all that is grateful and obliging ; consider also how much there may be of regretful, in which, however, it is needless to indulge.

They have engaged a proper Lecture-room this year, in the neighbourhood of Portman Square. I will send you a pack of Prospectuses when they come out. It is a pitiless, and to me, most hateful Necessity, this of getting up to speak on any subject whatsoever : yet who knows whether after all this same inflexible Necessity, so cruel-looking, be not a useful, a blessed one !—I want to see what will come of this business of Lecturing ; the present trial will be more decisive than last year's. If nothing come of it, I shall really care almost nothing. But I want to see.

There is a Letter from John Sterling the other day ; in which he acknowledges your Letter, your friendship and kindness for him, but expresses great despair as to writing Articles. He is to be home in May, it would seem, and we shall then hear more.

I am far from well, and my Wife seems in danger of falling seriously ill. Adieu.

Ever yours truly,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 61

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, Poste Restante, Rome.

CHELSEA,
23rd March, 1839.

MY DEAR MILL,

Grant assures me that word of mine will be welcome to you in your foreign wanderings ; and

¹ This, Carlyle's second course of Lectures, was called "On the History of Literature, or the Successive Periods of European Culture," and embraced twelve Lectures—two a week, beginning on the 1st of May.

proposes, yesterday, by a solemn message thro' the Threepenny Post, that I should take for that end the first section of a sheet which he is about despatching. I willingly comply with so fair an offer. I ought to have written on my own footing, indeed, and meant to do it ; yet perhaps but for Grant's helpfulness it might have remained a mere pious purpose,—one of those unfortunate substances, with which, it is said, a certain place is “ paved ” ! My life is indeed altogether barren at present, so far as speech goes ; my indolence is great. I write to nobody except on the clearest compulsion : once a month to my Brother, and about as often to my Mother and kindred in Scotland.

Last time my Brother wrote, he mentioned having seen you, just arrived from Naples, and how you had sat with him for two hours. You must have been a Godsend to the man in that noisy solitude, where inaction and want of rational human communion seem to be his main sufferings hitherto. He did not report very flourishingly of your health ; but it was with an old date that he compared the actual aspect of matters ; I think he did not see you at all in England, last year, or indeed know you before otherwise than in the state of perfect strength. You will doubtless profit by the gentler winter, by the many interesting things you enjoy and lay up for enjoyment : nevertheless, if your disease be not subdued, nay if it were not much alleviated, I would still charge you to entertain no discouragement for that. Dyspepsia is an *old* friend of mine ; I know it pretty well now, by a daily and hourly acquaintance of twenty years. Of its virtues, its vices and severities, of the jewel which like the toad it bears in its ugly head (with a pest to it !) I have much to say, not admissible here : but there is one thing I have got great clearance in, That Doctors can in general do little for it ; that a man learns to be his own Doctor,

and finds a far worse case than I take yours to be, quite manageable at last. It is the *nervous-system* of people that write and think, above all, that feel, which is *too weak* for the work. You must lay less work on it ; one must learn to lay less. On the whole, as a worthy Scotch friend of mine said, last year, in speaking of the Duke of Wellington : “ One must be sorry for a man that is unhappy ; and yet if he is not unhappy,—I fear we must be still sorrier for him ! ” I do believe so. Fineness of organisation, nerves injurable, nerves injured, nearly sure to be injured : these I must apprehend to be the primary condition of all talent, of all spiritual worth whatsoever. And yet withal I say it is miserable and *criminal* to continue unhealthy ; one positively ought to get healthy, cost what it may or can !—From all which, I infer that perhaps the best thing will be, to get *half a horse* along with me, by and by, from some benevolent stallmaster hereabouts, and take to riding !

My existence here, as I told you, is outwardly as good as barren at present. I lie altogether fallow ; and am even right thankful that I can do so. I have been reading a variety of things ; books about Cromwell and the England of his day : some people will have me write some delineation of that. We shall see, we shall see : but, for the present, it does not look at all promising. I fancy I shall write something by and by. But as yet my soul’s first wish is silence, silence. You will understand that better by and by. For the rest I have on hand a new Course of Lectures in these weeks ; not audible to you, this year,—be thankful you. They are but six : “ On Modern Revolutions ” (I think) : Protestantism ; English Commonwealth (Puritanism) ; French Revolution (Girondism, Sansculottism) ; we shall cobble up some kind of story about it, I have little doubt. It is judged expedient to keep the ground open in that department of industry till we see farther ; tho’

I cannot say I have any liking for it at all ; only less aversion than for writing in the mood I am in. Besides, this year I shall care far less about it ; I mean likewise to get a horse, and be in better health : I am better than formerly, much *quieter*. The Americans have sent me a handsome purse of money as the produce of their Edition of the Revolution Book : is not that a smart thing ? It was Emerson's doing. Our English Edition is just about out too ; for which Fraser, blushing at the sight of the Yankee Bills (he actually blushed), says he will have cash to give me also, which he " hopes will be satisfactory " ! I wait to see *this* before settling about a reprint for England and Yankeeland together. On this side all is well ; and both you and I, we must admit, are handsomely out of the affair. Your review of it was very bold ; second only to the boldness of writing such a thing. *Il faut oser*.

I have hardly seen Buller once since you went away. He is quite silent till once Easter be past, and the Canada affair come specially on. All is silent, in fact, for me, out of that quarter ; a jargon which I do not now even read Fonblanque's weekly abstract of. I see grapeshot, at no great distance, in the North, and gibbets ; and inarticulate wretchedness, which *must* have itself articulated ; and for articulating it, a set of [*Letter torn*] *pauca verba* ! Radicalism, with its hidebound limitation, and its barren, bloodless formalism, self-conceit, and pusillanimity, is a thing one daily has less patience for.

The Austins are gone to Richmond ; I have not seen much of them since you went ; John Austin hardly above once ; at which time I thought him greatly improved by his Malta work. I have seen—Bulwer's *Richelieu* and Bulwer himself : *ach Gott im Himmel* !—But, alas, what will Grant say ? What would Job himself say to see his sheet consumed in this manner ?—Adieu, dear Mill : come soon

back to us ; healthier and as kind-hearted as ever. If you see John Sterling, as you are like to do, remember me between you.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 62

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Monday night [7th October, 1839].

MY DEAR MILL,

If that place were freely offered to me, with the duty, we will say, of teaching some reasonable, useful thing, which a man in the year 1839 could name Moral Philosophy, with expressed or implied liberty to do it as he conscientiously, having regard to all the circumstances of the thing, best could ; in that case, I should require four-and-twenty hours, I think, to deliberate earnestly with myself whether I ought to accept or not. Perhaps I might accept it ; perhaps too, I might repent accepting it : it would not be very easy for me to decide. But the contingency of the whole matter, the necessity of making application, solicitation, &c., &c., form an altogether conclusive weight in the negative scale ; and I decide at once that I will not become a *candidate* in that sense.

Pray answer Professor Nichol that this, as near as I can describe it, is my position towards the thing ; and give him many thanks for me.

Sterling's is a splendid Article ;[†] in spite of its enormous extravagance, some will like it ; many are sure to talk of it, and, on the whole, to be instructed

[†] John Sterling's Essay on Carlyle appeared in the *London and Westminster Review* for October, 1839. It was reprinted in *Archdeacon Hare's Essays and Tales by John Sterling*, London, 1848.

by it. No man in England has been better reviewed than I,—if also no one worse.

When are you coming to see me again?

Ever affectionately yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 63

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHelsea,

Tuesday [22nd October, 1839].

MY DEAR MILL,

On Sunday I learned from you that another Number of the Review was to be published : but it strikes me that perhaps you wish to print only gratuitous articles on that occasion ; that an article of mine will be of little or no more use to you than any other which would cover the paper reasonably.

I have, for a good many weeks at intervals, been writing down in a very loose manner, a variety of things about the Poor, about Radicalism, the Priesthood, the Aristocracy : it is an attempt to utter in suitable language, and apply to the present aspect of things, the fundamental notions which you know me to entertain ; an attempt which prospers very ill with me, hating as I do to appear in the character of objurgator, to wrangle, or seem to wrangle, with any one,—and not, were it even by retiring into vacuum, to have it all my own way !

A great many sheets lie covered ; mostly with things worthless ; here and there, with a thing that might be preserved and printed. I find, in these days, that I must bring it under some rubric, and finish it ; or else tie a string about it, and shove it indefinitely into the background ; perhaps, without any string, into the *fire*. Lockhart, long ago, was desirous I should put it into some reasonable shape of a pleading and protestation to the upper classes

on behalf of the under. That is not perhaps impossible, tho' surely it is not very feasible. On the other hand, Benthamite Radicalism at this time seems to me like a wind-bladder *rent*, lying flaccid now, probably enough forever. What am I to do? One is hard bested, squeezing oneself into any of the marketable shapes!

Pray tell me what is the interest of your Review (if it have any interest), and your own *wish*, in regard to such a thing. Probably your answer will illuminate me more or less.

I wish you would get stronger; tho' I know dyspepsia, sick nerves, and perpetual uneasiness or pain to be nowise dangerous to *life*, I do not like to see you so thin. Probably this coil of annoying labour you are now to throw off your shoulders will prove a great and wholesome alleviation. I still continue to have faith in horse-exercise, especially were summer once here.

Yours ever truly,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 64

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,
6th December, 1839.

MY DEAR MILL,

After a good deal of consulting and considering this way and that, I have found that on the whole it would be best to give Fraser the Paper,¹ and let

¹ The paper referred to was the MS. of *Chartism*, which he had sent to Mill to read and make remarks on. Mill, on returning it a few days before the date of this letter, wrote the following on a small piece of paper attached to the MS.: "It is a glorious piece of work, and will be a blessed gospel to many if they read it and lay it to heart. I took a great piece of paper to make notes upon, but found scarcely any to make. . . . I should be very averse to disturb any other arrangement you may have made, or may wish to make; but it would delight me much to let this be the

him send it out as a Pamphlet, for the *Tories* to read. He "could not undertake to publish any reprint from the *Westminster*": I calculated that the Tories would not see me for a long time, if at all, on any other scheme. So there we are,—wisely, or unwisely. I shall at any rate be the sooner rid of the thing; in a week or two: a great blessing of itself.

Mazzini and Usiglio called here yesterday; but I unluckily was out. They are coming again on Monday evening: durst you venture thro' the night-air for such a purpose?

Always yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 65

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Wednesday [7th October, 1840].

DEAR MILL,

I perused your *Tocqueville* last night, with great satisfaction. It is a pleasure to see anything so well stated, in such lucid sequence and completeness, the pen so effectively performing what it undertook to do. *Tocqueville*, I think, suits you a little better than he did me; tho' I honour him too after his kind. Your objections to him are precisely to the same effect as mine, but luckily they do not run so deep as mine,—almost into the very heart, I fear! The Book will do much good, and your Article much.

And now when will you write of the *New Aristocracy* we have to look for? That seems to me the question; all Democracy a mere transitory prepara-

last dying speech of a Radical Review. I do not think a Radical Review ought to die without saying all this—and no one else could say it half so well. Any number of copies of it might be printed in pamphlet form from the same types."

tion for that. You hint pertinently at it in concluding ; but had no room there to do more. I shall really like to hear you on the *sequel* ; you and all wise men.

My friend Sewell of the *Quarterly* is what the Germans call *ein sonderbarer Christ* ; his “thirty-nine glasses” lift him above comparison with Men or Formulas. In all History, I think, Puseyism seeks its fellow ! The poor old Shovel-hat beginning, at this hour of the day, to assert from the house-tops : “*I* either came out of Heaven and am a godlike miracle and mystery, or *else* an unfortunate old felt, demanding to be flung to the beggars” ! It is the fatallest alternative I ever heard of for the Church of England.

A huge hamper of Cromwell Books arrived yesterday ; frightful to look upon. I am for coming up one of these nights to see what you have in that sort. One learns almost nothing ; yet one has to read, —it keeps one’s own mind fixed vehemently on the thing ; really that is the chief use of it !

Yours ever truly,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 66

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,
24th February, 1841.

DEAR MILL,

It was a pity I missed you last Sunday ; there are so few *intersections* now, our orbits running in a perverse concentric way !

I have read the first act of this *Vivia Perpetua*, and mean to go over the others before long. There is a certain genial vivacity discernible ; not yet in contact with Nature,—communicating with Nature,

as yet, at second-hand, thro' "Elder Dramatists," &c., &c., but capable perhaps of getting into *contact*. I almost esteem it a misfortune that such a person should have got into the "Legitimate Drammar" at all; the prevailing element in which, for the present, is — Ask Horne, Heraud, Reade, Brown-ing and Company!

Alas, whether a man be about to sing, or whatsoever he be about to do, it is sad for him if he have no native *well* to drink from; but only a purchased wash-bason containing more or less copious wringings from Ben Jonson, Charles Lamb, &c.!

Is Mrs. Taylor in Town at present; and if so what is her address?

I am fretted nearly to fiddlestrings, really a most pitiable creature; correcting Proofsheets,¹ &c., &c. Thank Heaven it is nearly done now. I have thoughts of running off to the Isle of Wight for a week, where my Brother is.

This thing on *Heroes* proves to be a stranger kind of Book than I thought it would. Since men do read without reflection, this too was worth writing. For men that read otherwise, it lay mostly legible in what I had long since written. *Prosit*.

Yours always affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 67

T. Carlyle to Mrs. Taylor (afterwards Mrs. Mill).

CHELSEA,

7th March, 1841.

DEAR MRS. TAYLOR,

For the last ten days we have been labouring here under a doleful visit of *Influenza*; unable to *do*

¹ Of his *Lectures on Heroes*, now being published as a book.

anything, not so much as live without doing mischief ! It is not usual with me to meddle with these epidemics ; but this time it has been my lot. I believe it is perhaps a beneficial crisis : for these many months I have been in a very bad way ; and now this, were it once over, may perhaps be the beginning of improvement. Unfortunately, just as I began to recover, my Wife was taken ill. Your Note would have been answered sooner, had it not been for all this.

Vivia Perpetua seems to me to have more merit than any of the " Dramas " I have seen of late years ; George Darley's alone excepted. This is not saying very much. I wish the Authoress would take into some other department. She wants, with whatever effort, to get down upon the *rock*, to fix herself there ; and most of this hitherto is but loose gravel, tradition and hearsay, which will never properly suffice her. Alas, it is a terrible business that of getting down upon the rock ! But it is possible for every human soul : it is a pity if a gifted human soul should not at least tend thitherward, strive thitherward.

When you get back to Kent Terrace we shall surely see you. One of my most ardent hopes is to get out of London this summer ; far away from it. I know not yet whitherward, and indeed care not much : but the demand for " silence " is getting very peremptory with me.

Really as Mahomet says, there ought to be " pearl houses " for us all ; each his own hollow pearl of due size for living in ; and then also we ought to " sit on seats facing one another " !—It cannot be managed, in these sublunary parishes.

Yours, dear Mrs. Taylor,

With true good wishes,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 68

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

21st March, 1841.

DEAR MILL,

You are very good, first to think so many kind things about that little Book,¹ and then to volunteer writing them to me. I may well value your approbation ;—what man's more ? It was mine at a time when I had very few other men's in the world. That will be always memorable to me.

Something like what you say did occasionally gleam forth upon me while I wrote down those things. But now that it all lies there, little is visible but triviality, contemptibility,—and the happy prospect of washing one's hands of it forever and a day. No Book of mine ever looked more insignificant to me : it *was* all as if I had been trying “to sing through the barrel of a quill” ;—a very ineffectual song !

You must not abandon your reprint. The words that a man speaks from his own clear insight and belief, are not so plentiful among us at present as they should be ! There is good always in such words, whatever they may otherwise be. They are the only words worth printing and reprinting ! Go over those Essays again ; you will find much in them which the world would be no worse for a second reading of.

I do long to see your Book on Logic ; to understand clearly what it is *you* mean by that. With me the *act of believing* gets ever more amazing, indescribable : but you also know that act ; let us hear what you can say about it, what you will describe of it.

News is come from Sterling that he is taken ill

¹ *Lectures on Heroes.*

again ; that he cannot get to Falmouth at present. For me, the Isle of Wight still hovers before me, at a distance of more than a week at the shortest.

Adieu, dear Mill.

Yours ever affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 69

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

TEMPLAND, THORNHILL, DUMFRIESSHIRE,

11th April, 1842.

MY DEAR MILL,

All along I have had a thought of sending you some word of salutation out of this my solitude : it is in such places and circumstances that Friends far away from us become near, and we have more of their *society*, in the best sense, than when the distance was hardly as many yards as it is now miles. It is such a torrid Sahara whirlpool, that of London ; men's very thoughts cannot meet. Men have no time to *think* ; they have only time to scheme and work ! Fate is kind even in its cruelty, to quench down the poor tumults of existence now and then, and render audible to us "the ever-pealing hum of old Eternity !"

It is long since I have had such a sorrowful but almost sacred kind of season as in these last weeks.¹ Tonight is my last composed evening here : on the morrow all explodes into uproar of Packers, Porters, Auctioneers ; and in three days more all has ended—no habitation for any of us here any more.

My company has been with poor rustic people, on most poor business, spun to the maximum of

¹ Mrs. Carlyle's mother had died in February of this year, and Carlyle was called to Templand, where as her executor he had to remain some two months winding up her affairs.

length on their part, cut short with the maximum of brevity on mine. This done, the day and the night has been all my own ; I have roamed by loud-rushing waters, wild solitary hills ; gone wandering and musing as I listed, as the hour gave. I have been very sad ; but not miserable, far from miserable. There is something infinitely sanative in the sight, face to face, of this great universe,—*God's* universe, as one's whole heart may discern it to be. A divine old universe, our old mysterious Mother ; of which all that can be preached and prated, in the modern and in the ancient time, is but a mockery in comparison to the *unspeakable* meanings of it. "God is great" : one really can say little more ; and ought to keep silence mainly, having admitted that.

Your visit to my poor Wife was very kind, and seemed to do her real good. She warmly acknowledged it in her Letter of that day, and remarked how beautiful a thing "humanity coupled with perfect good breeding" was. Thanks to you, for her sake and my own. The little Liverpool Cousin¹ declared herself charmed ; had never seen, &c., &c. If you pass that way again before my return, it will be a new kindness to look in a second time. This has been a sore wound for my poor little Partner ; who is not of nerves to bear such affliction lightly. Her last Parent, almost her last remaining relative :—it is but once that one can lose a Mother. Alas, and how *all men*, from the beginning of creation have been as it were born to encounter even that : it is the sharpest of calamities, and the universallest except death only ! They are poor prophets that twaddle to me about the benevolence, etcetera, of the Creator : as if the unutterable, unfathomable Creative had nothing else to do but constitute itself into a Soup-kitchen, and God Most High were mere President of a universal Charity Ball ! In no time of

¹ Jeannie Welsh, eldest daughter of Mrs. Carlyle's uncle John.

history, I think, has such wretched stuff been spoken and snivelled about God,—not even in times when they called him Moloch and Baal. Woden was worth twenty gods of the sort they have in Exeter Hall. Alas, alas !

But I must quit all that ; all that is far from my task at present. In some ten days more I may be in London : shall I not hope to see you straightway ? Adieu, dear Mill ; I love you always !

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 70

T. Carlyle to Mrs. Taylor, Walton-on-Thames.

CHELSEA,

13th July, 1842.

MY DEAR MRS. TAYLOR,

What you ask of me is very flattering ; and seemed so small a matter, in regard to “trouble” or the like, that I could not but at once accede to your request when Mr. Taylor came, that same evening, to enforce it and receive my answer.

During these two days, however, there have various doubts arisen ; and, on the whole, a serious, practical question, which I now anew submit to your decision, Whether you really ought not to appoint another to that trust ; whether I myself, in justice to all interests, ought not still to decline it !

The fact is, you have not among all your friends any person, possessed of common sense and arrived at the years of discretion, who is so totally unacquainted with every form of what is called Business ; nor, I think, unlikelier now ever to become acquainted with it. For example, were the matter (as Mr. Taylor assured me this present one could at the utmost only be) that of seeing certain monies properly invested in Stock, I should not of myself in the least know

when it was "properly" done, but must depend altogether on the judgement of others. *Money* generally is one of my *enemies*,—whom I never look at except on compulsion, and then with the strangest *art of oblivion* : if you will believe me, I do not at this moment (nor at any moment, except for some half hour after I have looked and rummaged among paper bundles) know, within fractions equal to a fourth or a third of the whole, how much money I myself have,—easy as that were to count ! I understand only that I have "money enough for a while to come" ; and so think no more of it, can think no more of it. Judge whether you would like your dear children's interests in such a hand ! Truly I am myself a mere child in regard to all that ; besides being every way a kind of hermit, gymnosophist, monk, or whatever my name may be, growing yearly more and more secluded from all worldly things, more and more indifferent to them, heartily indifferent to them all. This is the real fact.

Of my trustworthiness to do what I undertake, and of my true readiness to serve you in a much larger matter, I will not raise any doubt. But it is inconceivable that in your circle of friends there should not be many persons who combine these qualities with some knowledge of practical affairs,—one of *whom* therefore, and not I, is actually the *fittest*, and ought to be appointed. On the whole, my dear Friend, I will invite you to re-examine the matter, and appoint another !—If there be any real necessity why I, in particular, should creep out of my snail-shell into so unknown a department of things, doubt not I will readily creep out, and do my best when out ; but if not, I pray you, for your sake and my own, let me continue to lodge there !

Mr. Taylor seemed to say, it would be, at any rate, about a fortnight before the papers were ready.

I will request you to bid him pause for a day or two. I have a notion to come out to Walton, and speak with you of this matter. Could not I walk from Richmond to your house, and back again in time, some day,—say Saturday or Monday next? You are at home; alas, you are too sure to be at home!

Believe me always,

My dear Mrs. Taylor,

Yours with true regard,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 71

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

1st February, 1843.

DEAR MILL,

I am about sending off those Berlin Autographs on Sunday first. If you can find a Bentham, Brougham, or whatever you can find, will you send it to me before that date. Your Father's autograph, at any rate;—your own I shall not need!—Yesterday I heard from this Varnhagen a description of the Austins, whom he had met. The "Mrs. Sarah Austin" appears to have won laurels from him: the John Austin to have seemed perhaps—*etwas bedenklich*, in a point or two!

Come soon again some evening or Sunday. Favonius and all the West Winds and Spirits invite you,—as do some other spirits withal.

The news from Sterling is again not so favourable: "weak," "recovery slow"—nothing more as yet.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

¹ "Too sure to be at home," because she was in ill health. The above letter saved Carlyle from being appointed trustee to Mrs. Taylor's children.

LETTER 72

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

9th November, 1843.

DEAR MILL,

I forgot to ask, the other night, If you had a *Biographia Britannica* in your possession, and could, without damage to yourself otherwise, gratify your benevolence by lending it to me? I believe I had better buy the Book; but at present I know not where to find it. Your *Whitelocke*, as well as *Evelyn* and probably others, are all here safe. Surely I shall one day get out of these abysses of "dry rubbish,"—into which, why did I ever enter!

In these weeks it has become manifest to me, after four years of the dreariest reading ever read, that I must actually write something on Cromwell and Puritanism, and get myself delivered from it. No more impossible task ever fell to my lot. I have already tried it successively on ten or twenty different tacks, and been everywhere repelled; and up to this hour I but write and burn, and then write again, very miserably. Were I once into it, the thing would go!—Pity me, and pray for me; and come to see me soon.

Yours ever as of old,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 73

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

Friday [4th July, 1845].

DEAR MILL,

I have had for a long time a *Whitelocke* of yours, which is now got much marked with Notes of mine, generally unintelligible to everybody else.

I lately fell in with a nice clean copy of the Book : if you have not some *pretium affectionis* attached to your own (as is possible), I will give you this instead ; and bring it up some evening to you.

My hurry and confusion for these many months past has been extreme ; but I hope to be through this present enterprise in some six weeks now ;—and I sometimes think I shall then quit *Cromwell* and these Puritan Lumber-books for good.

Yours ever truly,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 74

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, India House.

CHELSEA,

30th April, 1852.

DEAR MILL,

Can you or Mrs. Mill¹ send me the address of Miss Gillies ("Miss Margaret Mary Gillies"), with whom, as I remember out of old days, both of you used to be well acquainted? It appears there has some rumour reached America of Miss Gillies being in possession of certain papers belonging to or connected with the late Margaret Fuller (whose *Biography* you may perhaps have heard of) ; and I am charged with a pious message to Miss Gillies on that subject. Pray help me so far.

I respect your solitude ; and indeed find it necessary myself to cultivate the same, as years grow upon me. No truer wish for the happiness of you both dwells anywhere than here,—which is of some use to myself if of none to any other body.²

Believe me, dear Mill,

Yours always very sincerely,

T. CARLYLE.

¹ Formerly Mrs. Taylor, whom Mill had married in 1851.

² Mill had some years before the date of this letter almost entirely withdrawn himself from the society of his old friends, owing to the Mrs.

LETTER 75

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, Blackheath, Kent.

THE GILL, CUMMERTREES, ANNAN, N.B.,

28th June, 1858.

DEAR MILL,

Here is an ingenuous-looking young man who applies to me on a subject I can give him no good guidance in. As it lies partly in your old department, and your old Humanity is still memorable to me, I consider it possible you might consent to invest half an hour (not more) of your time, were it even Official time, in this speculation of a young inquiring spirit and his bit of "progress in life," all-important to himself at least! Upon such chance I have ventured to advise his making an attempt upon you (middle of the day, Wednesday next, *Examiner* Office, for half an hour); but if you cannot receive him, refuse him without scruple, for I have marked it as extremely uncertain,—to make the disappointment less, if not the pleasure greater.

I have taken refuge here, out of the quasi-infernal London element, for a few weeks: one of the nearest approaches I can make to a practical *Ramadan*, or month of (modern) Silence and Prayer, with the accompaniment of clean air, limpid water, and an old scene every square yard of which is familiar to me, and the entire populations of which are *new*, and do not know Joseph any more. I often think, if you were in the next cottage, half a mile off, what discoursing we should still have, in front of the ancient

Taylor episode and the comments made thereon. There was no breach of friendship, however; it only assumed a passive form. Carlyle seems to have thought that he had unintentionally given Mill some cause of offence; but this was not the case: his attitude to Carlyle was precisely the same as that to other old friends. He answered Carlyle's letters—even the later and shorter ones—kindly, respectfully and (for him) cordially; but, of course, with little of the heartiness and intensity of feeling which characterise Carlyle's.

Selgovian Sea [the Solway], and the Cumberland Mountains rising dumb and grand to rear of it,—not grown old as some others of us. But perhaps Pythagorean silence, tho' painfuller, is better.—I do design some day to find out Blackheath, and see and hear once more. I send many unchangeable regards to Mrs. Mill ; and am ever yours sincerely,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 76

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, Blackheath, Kent.

CHELSEA,

13th March, 1866.

DEAR MILL,

Dr. Löwe, a German political gentleman of some eminence, whom I don't myself know, but who is very favourably spoken of by others whom I trust, is desirous to translate, for behoof of his countrymen, your *Essay on Representative Government* ; and applies to me, through a Count von Reichenbach, a very estimable person, to ask in his name, If you will please to consent to that operation ?

Löwe was at one time President of what they called the Frankfurt Parliament (where this Reichenbach sat as his Colleague, and got ruined by the operation) ; for years after that, Löwe too was an Exile in England, then in America ; but has made matters good again (*without any ratting* or baseness, it would seem), and is now again a Prussian M.P. and even an Official of some kind,—Official and Journalist, “of superior credit,” and ditto talent, in both capacities, say the testimonies worthy of belief. My Wife, who used to see Löwe in society, considered him a solid honourable character, marked by ardour at once and by strength of intellect and

good sense :—in short I have practically little or no doubt but your Book will be very well translated if you see good to proceed upon it.

For the rest, should you incline otherwise for any reason, please to understand that I have no interest or wish about it whatever, being myself totally a stranger, as above said ; and that I will report your No with perfect frankness, should your Yes (which I can hardly anticipate) *fail* to be the answer. If permitted, Dr. Löwe himself will of course write to you before starting. I believe there is no *pecuniary* ever got or offered in these cases ; but if one secure a goodish translation instead of a bad, that too is something.

My Wife, who urges upon me the writing of this Note, and declares it will not be a trouble to you, bids me send her best regards, and testify *her* lively remembrance of old days, and the pleasure it would give her to see you again. In all which you need not doubt but I, in my own way, cooperate with emphasis.

Yours always truly,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 77

T. Carlyle to J. S. Mill, Blackheath, Kent.

CHELSEA,

16th March, 1869.

DEAR MILL,

Here are two volumes¹ which have stood many years on the shelves here, occasionally admonitory to me, at times almost upbraiding. They belonged to your Father (as I remember) ; and have doubtless a value far beyond the intrinsic.

If I knew specifically your address at Blackheath,

¹ Of Evelyn's *Diary*.

there is perhaps something else that I might beg permission to send.¹

With many ineffaceable remembrances and kind wishes and regards,

Yours always,
T. CARLYLE.

The above is Carlyle's last note to Mill; his first was dated 5th October, 1831. They had corresponded, therefore, for nearly thirty-eight years. Mill died at Avignon on the 8th of May, 1873, aged almost sixty-seven years: Carlyle, at Chelsea on the 5th of February, 1881, in his eighty-sixth year.

¹ The "something else" which Carlyle would have liked to send was probably some little memento of Mrs. Carlyle, who had died since he had last written to Mill.

To JOHN STERLING



JOHN STERLING, ÆT. 24

Carlyle's Letters to John Sterling

LETTER 78

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Herstmonceux, Sussex.

5 CHEYNE ROW, CHELSEA,
4th June, 1835.

MY DEAR STERLING,

I said to Mill the other day that your Name was HOPEFUL ; of which truth surely this copious refreshing shower of really kind and genial criticism you have bestowed on the hardened, kiln-burnt, altogether contradictory Professor Teufelsdröckh, is new proof. Greater faith I have not found in Israel ! Neither here shall faith and hope wholly fail : know, my Friend, that your shower does not fall as on mere barren bricks, like water spilt on the ground ; that I take it hopefully in, with great desire (knowing what spirit it is of) to *assimilate* such portion of it as the nature of things will allow. So much, on this sheet, I must announce to you, were it at full gallop, and in the most imperfect words.

Your objections as to phraseology and style have good grounds to stand on ; many of them indeed are considerations to which I myself was not blind ; which there (unluckily) were no means of doing more than nodding to as one passed. A man has but a certain strength ; imperfections cling to him, which if he wait till he have brushed off entirely, he will spin forever on his axis, advancing nowhither. Know thy thought, *believe* it ; front Heaven and Earth with it,—in whatsoever *words* Nature and Art have made readiest for thee ! If one has thoughts not

hitherto uttered in English Books, I see nothing for it but that you must use words not found there, must *make* words,—with moderation and discretion, of course. That I have not always done it *so*, proves only that I was not strong enough ; an accusation to which I for one will never plead not guilty. For the rest, pray that I may have more and more strength ! Surely too, as I said, all these *coal-marks* of yours shall be duly considered, for the first and even for the second time, and help me on my way. With unspeakable cheerfulness I give up “*Talented*”: indeed, but for the plain statement you make, I could have sworn such word had never, except for parodistic, ironical purposes, risen from my inkhorn, or passed my lips. Too much evil can hardly be said of *it* : while speech of it at all is necessary.—But finally, do you reckon this really a time for Purism of Style ; or that Style (mere dictionary Style) has much to do with the worth or unworth of a Book ? I do not : with whole ragged battalions of Scott's-Novel Scotch, with Irish, German, French, and even Newspaper Cockney (when “*Literature*” is little other than a Newspaper) storming in on us, and the whole structure of our Johnsonian English breaking up from its foundations,—revolution *there* as visible as anywhere else !

You ask, How it comes that none of the “*leading minds*” of this country (if one knew where to find them) have given the “*Clothes-Philosophy*” any response ? Why, my good friend, not one of them has had the happiness of seeing it ! It issued thro' one of the main *cloacas* of Periodical Literature, where no leading mind, I fancy, looks, if he can help it : the poor Book cannot be destroyed by fire or other violence now, but solely by the *general* law of Destiny ; and *I* have nothing more to do with it henceforth. How it chanced that no Bookseller would print it (in an epoch when Satan Montgomery

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runs, or seems to run, thro' thirteen editions), and the morning Papers (on its issuing thro' the *cloaca*) sang together in mere discord over such a creation : this truly is a question, but a different one. Meanwhile, do not suppose the poor Book has *not* been responded to ; for the historical fact is, I could show very curious response to it here ; not ungratifying, and fully three times as much as I counted on, as the wretched farrago itself deserved.

You say finally, as the key to the whole mystery, that Teufelsdröckh does not believe in a "personal God." It is frankly said, with a friendly honesty for which I love you. A grave charge nevertheless, an *awful* charge : to which, if I mistake not, the Professor, laying his hand on his heart, will reply with some gesture expressing the solemnest *denial*. In gesture, rather than in speech ; for "the Highest *cannot* be spoken of in words." "*Personal*," "impersonal," One, Three, *what* meaning can any mortal (after all) attach to them in reference to such an object ? *Wer darf ihn NENNEN ?* I dare not, and do not. That you dare and do (to some greater extent) is a matter I am far from taking offence at : nay, with all sincerity, I can rejoice that you have a creed of that kind, which gives you happy thoughts, nerves you for good actions, brings you into readier communion with many good men ; my true wish is that such creed may long hold compactly together in you, and be "a covert from the heat, a shelter from the storm, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Well is it if we have a printed Litany to pray from ; and yet not ill if we *can* pray even in *silence*, for silence too is audible *there*. Finally, assure yourself, I am neither Pagan nor Turk, not circumcised Jew, but an unfortunate Christian individual resident at Chelsea in *this* year of Grace ; neither Pantheist nor Pottheist, nor any Theist or *ist* whatsoever, having the most decided contempt for all manner

✓ of Systembuilders and Sectfounders—so far as contempt may be compatible with so mild a nature ; feeling well beforehand (taught by experience) that all such are and even must be *wrong*. By God's blessing, one has got two eyes to look with ; and also a mind capable of knowing, of believing : that ✓ is all the creed I will at this time insist on. And now may I beg one thing : that whenever in my thoughts or your own you fall on any dogma that tends to estrange you from me, pray believe *that* to be *false* ;—false as Beelzebub till you get clearer evidence.

However, descending from the Empyrean to London pavements, let me tell you that I am actually bestirring myself to try whether the people will give me any employment in this matter of National Education. Mill and some others undertake to help me, but have not reported yet. It is a confused business ; out of which darkness is rayed forth on me hitherto. If we fail in it, there is some likelihood I may cross the Atlantic soon. The Book-trade seems to me *done* here : a man must go where his work lies, where they will keep him in existence for his work.

Your good Mother shocked us a little by the news that your return hither was uncertain.¹ We will still hope to see you ere long. May you come for the better, not for the worse, when you do come ! That is very sincerely my prayer ; for I do believe you to be a very honest fellow ; and, alas, I have never known Destiny too kind to such. God bless you and guide you !

I remain always,

Yours with great sincerity,

T. CARLYLE.

¹ Although Sterling had resigned his curateship at Herstmonceux, he was now purposing to reside there for some time longer.

LETTER 79

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Bordeaux.

CHELSEA,

3rd October, 1836.

MY DEAR STERLING,

Yesterday at Knightsbridge your good Mother chanced to mention that a Parcel was about setting out for you ; which, I calculate today, may carry Letters ; may carry one Letter, or slight line from me among the rest. You are to understand that, in the present half-desperate posture of my affairs and humours, I have, for a while back, fallen into the literally *total* abandonment of Letter-writing ; finding silence the suitablest : I write to nobody whatever, except once in the three weeks some word or two to my Mother ; once in the month another word or two to my Brother. Consider my writing to you therefore as a proof that you also are of the kindred ;—which I hope you esteem an honour, of its sort.

The news we get of you are vague ; much seems still dubious, even for the nearest future. I grudge that you should quit your beautifully civilized *Belsito*¹ for a dull savage Land of Timber (*Materies*, Madeira) ; but if the Doctors say it, why then we must submit. Meanwhile, they say you are jaunting about pretty pleasantly ; which ought to content us for the time. You have been at Lilbourne, and looked doubtless into the caves of Saint Emilien ; where I likewise often am, in fancy,—with these cursed Girondins of mine ! Next year, if it please the Upper Powers, why should not I come and see you face to face there, once more ; a knapsack on my back, a strong oak-stick in my hand ; this Earth with its greenness

¹ Belsito was the fine residence, near Bordeaux, which Sterling was occupying in the absence of its owner, an uncle of Mrs. Sterling.

belonging to me as well as to another? By the bye, the oak-stick shall be the one you gave;¹ so much is settled: I have got a sufficient ferrule for it some days ago, not without difficulty, and fitted on the same with my own hand and ingenuity: I propose to walk with it, as long as it will hold together; and to think often of a certain beautiful little episode in my poor Life-Epos, which has not many such in it. Episode it has been; Fate cannot hinder it from having been: a kinder Power may make it *more* yet, if such seem the *best* method. I was remarking to Jane, the other morning, that with Sterling I had unfortunately lost what was the flower of all that London had for me. But let there be no grumbling, no hypochondria: silent, cheerful of heart, wait what the Hours will bring.

John, from whom I have a Letter (dated Geneva) this morning, sends the friendliest inquiries after you; charges me to inform him what you resolve upon for the winter. He says one of the secret reasons that determined him, perhaps more than he was aware of, to go back to Rome, was the hope of having Sterling there. I readily believe it: people go upon strange reasons; our Doctor is one of the strangest of men.

No Review or Article *Mirabeau* comes with this Parcel; which omission, or seeming omission, was the point principally I had to explain by scrawling today. The Article *Mirabeau*, after fretting me I think four several times with unwelcome interruption, of Proofsheet, MS., Copy, etc., etc., all in hot haste, turns out to be "too long for the present No."; wherefore the unfortunate Able-Editors omit it. Not till January therefore can you hope to behold

¹ This walking-stick, always treasured as a memento of Sterling, hung in later years in Carlyle's dressing-room as long as he lived. It is still in a good state of preservation, and is carefully kept as a memorial of both the giver and the receiver.

this remarkable Production. As the French Advocate said, when the Judges ordered him into arrest : " I begin to be weary of the treatment I experience here."

The Revolution History goes on about as ill as anybody could wish. I am really quite out of order ; owing partly perhaps to this frightful splashing weather : I sit down to write, there is not an idea discernible in the head of me ; one dull cloud of pain and stupidity ; it is only with an effort like swimming for life that I get begun to think at all. Nevertheless the thing does go on ; and shall by God's blessing go on till it is ended, or I am ended : other blessedness one cannot hope from it. My habitual conviction about the work is that it ought to be *burnt*, that it will never be worth a farthing to any man or woman. Yet I do not burn it : I go floundering along ; hoping that the heavy hand of this Enchantment shall be got loosened from me (for it is really like a spell), and I be *free*, were it only with no possession, beyond that of freedom, remaining now for me. Forward, therefore.

Mill, they say, writes from Nice : he is not going into Italy, owing to Cholera and quarantine : his health is a little, and but a little, improved. Mrs. Taylor, it is whispered, is with him, or near him. Is it not very strange, this pining away into desiccation and nonentity, of our poor Mill, if it be so, as his friends all say, that this charmer is the cause of it ? I have not seen any riddle of human life which I could so ill form a theory of. They are innocent, says Charity ; they are guilty, says Scandal : then why in the name of wonder are they dying broken-hearted ? One thing only, is painfully clear to me, that poor Mill is in a bad way. Alas, tho' he speaks not, perhaps his tragedy is more tragical than that of any of us : this very item that he does not speak, that he never could speak, but was to sit imprisoned

as in thick ribbed ice, voiceless, uncommunicating, is it not the most tragical circumstance of all?

I saw Taylor¹ lately; very grave and happy enough. He is devising new Dramas. He could not fancy why you were not delighted to be free from business,—as he himself would be; for a time at least. It is the way with us all.—The Wilsons² are at Tunbridge; the Bullers are in Switzerland. I have not seen Maurice. Your worthy Mother looks ten years younger for her trip to the Netherlands: I think you will rejoice to have this under my hand. The Head of the House is also well; dashing along, in the old erratic manner, with the old impetuosity and velocity; on the whole, with a healthy vitality, which it does one good to look on. I grow to honour health of mind beyond all things in the world; health of body, which is generally the near relative of it, only a degree less. My dear Friend, let us both get well! I do hold it, in my own case, a kind of disgrace and crime to be sick: is it not Nature herself with her great voice that says to me: Fool, seest thou not that thou art *astray*; not in the right road there (tho' all the world gabbling recommend it), but in the wrong one? Were the Book done, I will see into it.

The sheet is done, my dear Sterling; and not the Book. Too suddenly! I beg a kind remembrance to Mrs. Sterling; and to the young Lady you permitted me to call "Anne Barton," who I suppose is in Ireland.—Think of me with tolerance; as of a sinful man who righteously loves you. Adieu!

T. CARLYLE.

My Wife is out walking, and does not know of this; otherwise her kind word had been here.

¹ Henry Taylor (afterwards Sir Henry).

² John Wilson and his sister, who were both very helpful to Carlyle in making arrangements for his Lectures a little later.

She is not well ; and yet not worse than you have been used to see her, far better than while in Scotland.

I read an interesting little Book in two volumes ; *Gespräche mit Goethe* by Eckermann : did I mention it in the other Letter ? It is very curious to see the *Welt-Dichter* conditioned down into the Weimar Burgher and *Staats-rath*. Many of his *measurements*, of things and persons, I found utterly erroneous, his *footrul*e meanwhile a very correct one. In place and work, he and I part wider every day. *Vivat* still !¹

LETTER 80

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Belsito, Bordeaux.

CHELSEA, LONDON,
9th June, 1837.

MY DEAR STERLING,

There came to my Wife a brave Letter the other day ; which was read by us both with great pleasure. Your Father and Mother have it in their hands this very morning, as I calculate ; reading it down at Ascot Races, whither they are all gone. Said Letter is not the cause of my writing at present, for I had long meditated that ; but it perhaps accelerates me ; surely it does not retard. By the bye, I wish you would write oftener, without waiting for answer and return of post ; believe always that plenty of answers are flying towards you invisible thro' the air, and write when your Daimon bids you, and there lies a pen ready. Is not that a modest request ? I wish at present all manner of good men would speak to me by post or otherwise, and require no answer but a Turkish bow.

We rejoice to believe and see that you are much better in spirits and health than you were, shaking off

¹ The greater part of this letter appeared in the *New Letters of Thomas Carlyle* (John Lane, 1904).

the winter sediments ; clearing yourself up into Life with the new Summer. Blackwood's Farrago shall be notable to me, when the Table of Contents indicates any of those things. Otherwise for the last seven years I know little of *Blackwood*. One Number solely, by some accident, came into my hands last winter : of entirely ditch-water character ; Wilson himself weltering about in it, like a thing that *had* been. His palaver about "Mrs. Gentle" and so forth, and the whole story he had to tell, struck a kind of damp into me : Seven years are come and gone, and there still art thou palavering, palavering ; growing older, but not otherwise in growth ! Reviews and Magazines and the other Egyptian plague of what is called Literature, do in these days fill me with a kind of sacred horror. Equal at least to the Plague of frogs, and worse ones ; intrusive into your very bread-oven ! But as Corporal Nym says : *Pauca verba* !—Seriously, however, I am heartily glad to know you writing ; publishing in this vehicle or the other. One must take such vehicles as there are. *Lay* thy manna on the dog's-meat tray, since there is no other ; and let the Hawker hawk it among his quadrupeds ; if by chance a biped pass that way, he will snatch it and appropriate it thou knowest not how. Mill, whom I fell in with yesterday, was charmed to hear of your half-purpose of writing for him, on Shelley or what else it might be ; and prayed that it might become a whole purpose and a performance. In a word, my dear brother John, there is a decided faculty in you, which you are bound imperatively as your life's task to get out of you : which you will never get out, except, as you are doing, by effort after effort growing more perfect : *try* to do a thing if thou wouldst learn to do it. Let us see your Shelley, therefore, with such despatch as may be. Let us see all your thoughts on all kinds of things, with despatch. And yet, not with too much despatch : for there,

close by your best excellence, lies one of your worst dangers, according to me : concentrate the "sheet-lightning" into a bolt, my brave brother ; that is it !—And so shall we not work a little in our generation ; seen, or perhaps still better unseen ? *Ach Gott*, the time is so short ; the end is so unutterably great ! "One waited a whole Eternity to be born, and now a whole Eternity waits to see what one will do when born." Verily this whole world grows magical and hyper-magical to me. Death written on all, yet everlasting Life also written on all. How Homers and Mahomets and Bulwers and "snuffy Socinian Preachers" and all people and things that sojourned on Earth go marching, marching, towards the Inane ; till, as your boys say, *Flop !* they *are not*, they are alike forgotten ; the blue Azure has alike swallowed them all !—*Pauca verba* once more ! The words we have for such things are worse than none.

I ought surely to send you a touch of practical, terrestrial news before ending. But indeed I have small faculty, and suppose you better supplied already from other quarters. I have done nothing of late but dig earth and brick rubbish in this little *Garden*, so-called ; and walk solitary in the Lanes ; rather avoiding than seeking the face of men. Very spectral I am every way. My purpose now is, directly when the weather gets too hot, to fly into Scotland, to my Mother's cottage, and lie buried there for some time. How long I cannot say : *ce sera selon*. A beautiful hope is that you hold out to me of rambling in the Pyrenees beside you ! In very truth, I will inquire at Liverpool what Bordeaux Ships sail thence, what the cost is, &c., &c. ; and keep the possibility lying by me, as one of the beautifullest the time offers. Why has one not wings ? Why is a despicability of a Purse needed ; Purse growing light, long-necked ; that at last "will not fly when

flung against the wind"? Courage! My Address in Scotland, for at least six weeks from this, is: "Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan, N.B." My Wife continues here, with her Mother who came to us when the Influenza proved so hard. The poor Dame has a headache this morning; and knows not that I am writing to you, or her love were duly forwarded to all of you: she loves you all, I do know, so as people are not often loved at present here below. We are to lose Anthony; which grieves us all. He is a right fellow, with those black eyes of his, so sharp and yet so quiet; a man it would do one good to look upon once daily. Can you explain to me rightly, where did these two fellows, John and Anthony, come from? They are very singular characters to see in this world in these times. Your Father and I go along very lovingly, with a sudden broadside of Logic now and then, each to show the other that he does carry gunpowder. We are smoke over the masthead, on these occasions; but it seems to purify the air between us, and then we sail along in the sweetest manner, gentle as Babes in the wood. Your Mother looks cheerful and well: it seems to be still uncertain whether she will not go and look at Switzerland with Anthony. I met Maurice in the Strand yesterday. He is growing broader, thicker, and gets a clerical air. I know not why I should not wish him clerical or an English Clergyman, yet I never do. His vehement earnestness in twisting such a rope of sand, (as I reckon that to be) occasions me at times a certain misgiving. Written very legible to my eyes, stands the doom of that thing. I will even praise Sterling's ill health which has taken *him* out of it without damage. Excuse my insolence. But I do think what I say, and more than I say. A man like Sterling cannot stand on cobwebs; O Heavens, no, he must have adamant to stand on, there is so much to front! *Quittons cela.*

I cannot say a word to you, of the Book or of the Lectures, except that by the unspeakable blessing of Heaven they are *finished*. My hearers were Mixtiform, Dandiacal of both sexes, *Dryasdustical* (Hallam, &c.), ingenuous, ingenious ; and grew, on the whole, more and more silent. As to the Book, I rather avoid hearing about it, what clack there may be about it ; of lamentation, admonition : “ The style ; ah, the style ! ” These poor people seem to think a style can be put off or put on, not like a *skin* but like a coat ! Now I refer it to Sterling himself (enemy as he is), whether a skin be not verily the product and close kinsfellow of all that lies under it ; exact type of the nature of the beast : *not* to be plucked off without flaying and death. The Public is an old woman : let her maunder and mumble.—I have met with an excellent Arabian thing the other day : Hariri’s *Ebu Said* translated into German by Rückert ; mark it down in your Notebook, and read it the first chance you have. A genuine living soul ; fiery-vital in its kind ; shining through a most exotic Arab vesture : hardly any other kind of reading does me any good.

My Brother writes, almost every Letter, that you ought to winter not at Pisa but at Rome : he declares again and again, that Rome were better for you. I know not that he is quite incorrupt in that judgement : he has clearly a deep secret desire to have you near his own dwellingplace. Yet do consult him, and take seriously into view what he will urge. He knows about that matter, as well as most do, and is a veracious man, not to be biassed beyond limits by any wish of his own in your case.—O, that I were in the Campan valley, Sterling sitting on one crag, I on another, the Pyrenean sky and cliffs overhead, a pipe in one’s teeth, the Kensington stick¹ at one’s feet, and the world with its “ vociferous platitudes ” a thousand miles off !—Adieu, my Friend ;

¹ The walking-stick that Sterling had given. See *ante*, p. 196.

may a good Guidance go with you whithersoever you wend. I surely think we shall meet again, often and long, under the sun. *Mit Gott.*

T. CARLYLE.

[On the margins.] I saw Lady Lewis one night at the Bullers'; a most considerate, composed, thoroughly compacted woman and lady: she spoke of one John Sterling by the title of an "angelic being," I think, or something of that sort. She is to live at Woolwich now. Our united love to Mrs. Sterling; to Teddy the Tiler and the other augmenting Diminutives, especially her with the Doll.¹ Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire, that is the address, if you love me. *Ohe jam satis est.* Flop!

LETTER 81

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Knightsbridge.

[Forwarded to Brighton.]

SCOTSBRIG, ECCLEFECHAN,

28th July, 1837.

MY DEAR STERLING,

Every time the Boy, these last two weeks, has returned from the village Post-office, I have looked expectantly for some trace of your handwriting; but there comes none. I may well say, it was one of my greatest regrets in quitting Babylon when I did, that I was not to meet with you there. Alas, there are so few people one cares to meet anywhere, so few whose speech is not a jargon and an affliction to one! Where are you, my good Friend? Is it appointed that you return over seas without seeing me, depart and make no sign? My Wife writes of you copiously, but in the lyrical rather than the

¹ Little Charlotte, who had once asked Carlyle to put on her doll's shoes for her. See *Life of Sterling*, Pt. iii. c. i.

historical style ; except these notices of hers I have none ; and indeed can have none, having ceased in these weeks to write Letters to any mortal. I know you are not at Knightsbridge, but at some one of the sundry " Cliftons " there are in this Isle : pray tell me which of them, what your humour and position is, what your plans are. I would right gladly see you, and would even make an active effort that way, impossible as effort seems at present. At all events write me a Letter or Line, specifying your orbit for the next weeks, and where the minimum of distance and impediment between us may be expected to lie. I dare not promise to myself that I will *do* anything considerable in consequence of knowing ; but I should like to know it. The sum of the matter is, write if you have any time for such a thing ; if not, behold I have asked you to do it ; you shall live well and voyage well, remembering me as one by whom you are always like to be remembered.

And now having stated this, I ought to consider my actual enterprise complete. To write of myself, which is the only subject in this quarter, were at present one of the saddest Essays on *Nothing* ; unprofitable to do, distressing to see done. "*Silence*" : to how many thousand things in this world of ours, in this life of mine, is that the only word I can utter without fault ! In fact, I have thoughts some day of writing one of the powerfulest discourses I can on *Silence* : all speech, even a seraph's, is a triviality compared with it ; our age has *entirely* lost feeling of it, or all but entirely, and is become empty, and of the nature of a drum, &c., &c. : all this I have had thoughts of writing ; how much more in my present interlunar condition ought I to practise it ! There is no idler, sadder, quieter, more *ghostlike* man in the world even now than I. Most weary, flat, stale seem to me all the electioneerings and screechings and gibberings that the Earth is filled

with, in these or indeed in any days. Men's very sorrows, and the tear one's heart weeps when the eye is dry, what is in that either? In an hour, will not Death make it all still again?—Nevertheless, the old Brook, Middlebie Burn we call it, still leaps into its “*Caudron*” here, gushes clear as crystal thro' the chasms and dingles of its “*Linn*”; singing me a song, with slight variations of score, these several thousand years; a song better for me than Pasta's! I look on the sapphire of St. Bees Head and the Solway mirror from the gable-window; I ride to the top of *Blawearry* and see all round from Ettrick Pen to Helvellyn, from Tyndale and Northumberland to Cairnsmuir and Ayrshire: *voir c'est avoir*: a brave old Earth, after all;—in which, as above said, I am content to acquiesce without quarrel, and at lowest hold my peace. It is what we ought to do. One night, late, I rode thro' the village where I was born. The old “Kirkyard Tree,” a huge old gnarled ash, was rustling itself softly against the great Twilight in the North; a star or two looked out; and the old graves were all there, and my Father's and my Sister's: and God was above us all. I really, as I said, have no words to speak.

I read little or nothing, hear of little or nothing. I brought Müller's History (*Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft*) with me: a work of endless research, of great talent; but unsuitable for me; unedifying, with its high Tacitus-Philosophy and classicality, not without a touch of pedantry. I am still in the Third volume. On the other hand, I did read—Pickwick! what of it I could get; one whole day; Buller having recommended it in the *Review*. Thinner wash, with perceptible vestige of a flavour in it here and there, was never offered to the human palate: I will henceforth call Buller not the worst critic in Britain, but a critic I will not be led by. On the whole, however, is it not to be considered that I,

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for instance, did read *Pickwick*, and have not yet read *Johannes von Müller*? I sat almost a whole day reading it. Ought there not to be Books of that kind? It is not certain *Yes*; and yet not certain *No*: the Turks endeavour "to combine exercise with total passivity of indolence"; the human constitution has many wants. *Requiescat Pickwick*!

I am for Annan this afternoon, whither I sometimes go sea-bathing; I am sure of the tide at all events: your Letter can go in my pocket; by steam or horse-power, I calculate, it will find you out, and bring a welcome response to me. I have seen nothing of *Blackwood* or the verses which my Wife pronounces beautiful. Tell me what you are doing: for I suppose *it* to be something. Tell me whether you are still for Pisa, or have been persuaded towards Rome. My Brother spoke of a Letter he had got from you; of a hope he still had that you might be his neighbour? Where is Anthony, when you heard of him? On the Righiberg, or rustivating at some Interlaken? May good be with him wherever he is.—I send you my heart's wishes, my dear Sterling; and am always,

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 82

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Madeira.

CHELSEA,

25th December, 1837.

MY DEAR STERLING,

The tidings from Madeira were right welcome to us all. The delay and silence had been somewhat longer than we counted on; these newspaper accounts of shipwrecks and disaster, with possibility of evil to which poor man is ever liable: all this had alarmed some of us. But now happily there was nothing

of that ; and everything is as it should be. We can fancy you cantering along there, by the foot of the interior rock-country capped with mist, the sun shining on you, the ocean singing to you ; and how with tender reminiscences and hopeful prospections, with poetic dreamings and interpretations, you pass the winter altogether tolerably ; and return to us strong in the spring, and not leave us any more. May the Heavens grant it well ! I think there are few prayers about any man that are more earnest in me. The South of England, a snug house there, with books, pens, friends, and composed (unclerical) activity,—it is a consummation to be wished. Patience, and shuffle the cards.

The packet they are sending off in these days will be an immense *olla-podrida* of messages, Letters, pamphlets ; too much for you at one meal ; only that, like the Prophet Elisha, you are to live on it for forty days. Satiety alternating with starvation : it is a bad but an unavoidable arrangement. This moist Christmas morning, behold, I in my dreariness will add one mess to the Pot,—as it were, one cold potato to the *Irish stew*. Reject it not ; seeing that the poor contributor has no other.

Nothing can equal my languor, my silent stagnation, since you went. I have been half deaf for a good part of the time ; my head as if the left side of it were made of wood. In this state I wrote a long rigmarole on Walter Scott ; a thing deserving instant fire-death, but which they are going to print. No mortal could have less wish to speak a syllable about Scott, or indeed about anything in Heaven or in Earth than I then and now ; but the will of Destiny must be obeyed. My sole wish is that I could get to hold my tongue for twelve months to come. It is a wish, and almost necessity : for which I am occasionally devising schemes. A little money is requisite : how to gain a little money ? Lecture !

cries all the world ; Lecture on German Literature, on European Literature, on the French Revolution, on Things in General ! I can yet make nothing of London Lecturing ; I want two things, yes three : I want knowledge, of my audience, of myself ; I want impudence, I want health. Others there are that say I should give a course on German in Oxford and Cambridge to the young men ! I really believe I shall stir in that, and ascertain what hope is in it ; there seems to me no Lecturing I could understand so well. *Ach Gott !* But, on the whole, it is useless to kick against the pricks. If a man is to be doomed to death because he will not get upon the housetops, and cry, *me voilà*, I suppose, he must get up, and cry it—to the requisite extent. They send me letters, commendations about that Book, how glorious it is and will be ; to which I have to answer with the poor Frenchman : *Gloire, donne-moi du pain*.—But this is a bad strain I am getting into. I wish of all men that I had my John Sterling here at present. We will go on hoping, the thing I used to call “desperate hope.” Nay, on the whole, I really do always believe that I am on the way towards peace, and health both of body and mind. I go along like a Planet Jupiter with his five Belts which are supposed to be five storm-zones full of tempest, rain, and thunder and lightning,—Jupiter himself very tranquilly progressive in the middle of them. There ! See if you can do the like, you clear Phosphorus, smiling always in the Sun’s face ; clear Mercury, living always in the Sun’s arms, at a temperature, they say, hotter than redhot iron ! Such planets, are they not extremely peculiar in the world ?

Long before this you will have read Wilson’s leading-article, and your own poetry beatified. Wilson’s great heart never shows itself better then when he falls in with a man like you. My counsel is, Accept his recognition of *you* (for that is not so high even

as my own), and rejoice in it as a man has right to do : but as to *your vocation* for writing in verse,—do not believe Wilson a whit ! His impressions of all things are vivid, fiercely emphatic, but indefinite, vague, not in the least to be depended on for practice. And yet I look to see you now write a great quantity more of verse. Well, my friend, you must then. Nothing can convince a man, nothing ought to convince him, except his own experiment : let him *try* ; send out radii, in what directions his own Daimon and judgment order, till the *circumference* make him bound back again ! And so good speed to you, my brave brother John ; and this one counsel (which I have a mind to tattoo on the back of each of your hands, so all-momentous is it), *Festina lente*. I declare, it depends all on that.

I read the Rückert Translations from the Chinese, last week : they are very interesting, very beautiful : harvest-songs, drinking-songs, songs of household calamity and felicity ; an authentic, melodious human voice from the distance of the Yellow Sea, from the time of Quang-fu-tchee and the Prophet Ezekiel ! Authentic, *sincere* : there is almost no other merit for me in written things. The sacred Scripture itself is sacred and divine because it is more sincere than any other book. This Rückert shall abide with me in love, for its own sake and yours. I have read a great many other things ; but they are worth next to nothing : trash, trash ! One little Paper only, there is, which I hope to send you by and by ; a thing of very great merit and notability indeed : by your friend Emerson, the American, Author of that little Book called *Nature*. It is in the form of an “Oration” to some General Assembly of the Transatlantic brethren of Letters, calling itself “Phi Beta Kappa Society,”—have *you* Greek enough to interpret that ? I have not. But for the rest, as I say, this “Oration” to the Phi Beta Kappa is a right

thing, such a tone in it as never came across the water before ; as I have not heard in the world of late years. "Some call it mad, some inspired," says Miss Martineau ; whose copy is the only one I have yet seen. When mine comes I will send it you : I introduced you to Emerson the other week ; told him that "Nature" was gone to Madeira, in the hands of a very unmanageable kind of fellow, and that he must look in *Blackwood* and make friends with him. O, it is blessed, most blessed, to hear a man's articulate voice, in the infinite Babylonish jargon which is like to drive one entirely desperate at times !

Your horror of Goethe, your love of him and dread of being swallowed by him, does not in the least hurt my feelings. It is all right on your part ; and yet it must not continue there. Study the man, my friend ; get acquainted with him ; you will most probably be obliged to get acquainted with him yet. Then, I think, you will find him not an Anachronism in any wise, but a *Chronism*, nay, the only one hitherto discovered on this Planet of ours, in these distracted days of ours. No other man whatever, as I say always, has yet ascertained what Christianity is to us, and what Paganity is, and all manner of other *anities* whatsoever ; and been alive at all points in his own year of grace with the life appropriate to that. This in brief is the definition I have always given of the man since I first knew him : the sight of such a man was to me a Gospel of Gospels, and did literally, I believe, save me from destruction outward and inward. We are far parted now ; but the memory of him shall ever be blessed to me as that of a Deliverer from death.—But, on the whole, O friend John, what a belief thou hast in *the Devil* ! I declare myself an entire sceptic in that faith. Was there, is there, or will there be a great Intellect ever heard tell of without first a true and great Heart to begin with ? Never ; if my experience and faith in this God's

world have taught me anything at all. Think it not, suspect it not. Worse *blasphemy* I could not readily utter. Nay, look you in your own heart, and consider ! The Devil's name is Darkness and that only ; *Eigendünkel*, the blackest kind of Darkness, and wicked enough for any purpose. Fear no seeing man, therefore ; know that *he* is of Heaven, whoever else be not ; that the Arch-Enemy, as I say, is the Arch-stupid : I call this my Fortieth Church Article, —which absorbs into it, and covers up in silence, all the other Thirty-nine !¹

Since I began writing, John Mill has been here ; he is of purpose to write to you himself, and get your help in his *Review*, which has now become wholly his. What will you do ? Mill himself means really well, and according as you mean, all the way he goes : he is also parting from the Anatomical-preparation Radicals, deadeſt of men ; which is a good symptom.

Good be with you always, my dear Friend !

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 83

T. Carlyle to John Sterling.

CHELSEA,

Saturday [16th June, 1838].

DEAR STERLING,

I answer you as one in doleful dumps ; having had a fit of sleeplessness these three nights,

¹ Sterling's horror of Goethe was, at a later stage, by acting on Carlyle's advice to get acquainted with the man, converted into approval and admiration, as appears from his essays on "The Writings of Thomas Carlyle" (*London and Westminster*, 1839) and on "Characteristics of German Genius" (*Foreign Quarterly*, 1842). For in the former of these he writes : "The glory, however, remains, and must always remain, for Mr. Carlyle, of having been the first to inform that half of the civilized world whose speech is English, that Goethe is the man to whom, for fullness joined to fineness of nature, at once for capacity and accomplishment, no other of our age can be compared."

owing mainly, I suppose, to the hot weather. I think of flying out of this brick-furnace soon, to Scotland, to France, or somewhither. My right hand also continues lame.—Is it not strange in these circumstances that the world should wag on as usual ; the sun move at his old rate along the Zodiac ; you and Spedding hold plannings of *symposia*, &c., &c.? To me, had I not often witnessed the like already, it were next to unaccountable.

Alas, my friend, I do not think I can come on Monday. I am to dine on that day, if at all able, with Allan Cunningham and a frightful Scotch *etcetera* of Coronation-Editors, preparatory to which a breakfast with wits, four miles off? Ah, me !

You are very good to think me useful or ornamental in such a union, and surely if there is anything worth wishing for in this world, it is the meeting with friends, kind, honest-hearted and wise, who will let one live in friendliness among them. But there is one circumstance which for me, I fear, is like to be fatal : *I cannot dine*. Literally every dinner, as they order these things here, is martyrdom to me ; which I never submit to, except under the impossibility of seeing see-worthy people otherwise. Could you indeed arrange a meeting without that brutal appendage ! But I suppose no man can in England. With it, you may safely calculate on me as a guest, so often as my nerves will in any sort permit ; but, as a regular dining member, the rigorous gods have said, No ! The last Tavern-dinner I saw still lives in my remembrance, a “ Golgotha without the sacredness.” Pity me, and leave me alone in my nook.¹

I hope to see you here, however, on Monday. The printer lingers sadly with the last leaves of *Teufels-*

¹ Sterling was now founding a club, first called the “ Anonymous,” afterwards the “ Sterling Club.” Carlyle became a member of it. See *Life of Sterling*, Pt. ii. c. vi.

dröckh. In the course of next week I shall be ready to fly, if need continue.—My Wife grows better, not worse ; and salutes you well.

Yours ever truly,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 84

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Poste Restante, Rome.

CHELSEA,

7th December, 1838.

MY DEAR STERLING,

You ran off from me in Autumn altogether on the sudden ; instead of finding you at Hastings on my return from Scotland, I learned while sojourning there, that you were over the seas again for a winter in Italy. That midnight interview in the box-cab, on the pavement of London Streets, was the last I was to get of you for some time ! We hear duly of your progress, across the Alps, thro' the Picture-galleries, Lombard and Tuscan cities, beautiful Italian Nature and Art ; an articulate *Good-speed* goes now and then from us, and many an inarticulate one : what more could a Letter do ? However, I will this morning write you a Letter too, that you may have it in both ways.

I remained in all some eight weeks in Scotland ; three in Fife, diligently riding over green paths there, or walking silent by the shore of the many-sounding sea, with a due proportion of *bathings*,—with many unutterable meditations. Then I saw Scotch Parsons at dinner, in “ Yarrow visited ” or thereabout ;¹ but hastily quitted these. I spent a night with Jeffrey ; looked on the stones of Edinburgh City ; wondered whether it was solid or a dream. Then I saw my good Mother and Kinsfolk, my native soil of Annan-

¹ At Minto Manse, near Hawick, as guest of the Rev. D. Aitken.

dale. Finally I came drifting back hither ; foolish “drift-log on the sea of accident” ; where I ever since lie high and dry, not a whit wiser. Ah, my friend, you know little about *Silence*, much as you argue with me about it ! How many tragedies, epics, Haynes-Baily ballads, and bursts of parliamentary eloquence would it take to utter this one tour into the South of Scotland by an atrabiliar Lecturer on things in general ? *Pauca verba* : that is the only utterance for it.

On one subject, however, I must speak a word : the subject of wine. Standing duly ranged for my return, there waited me here two dozen elegant-looking pint bottles ; which, on being proved by the corkscrew, gave evidence of containing Port, of as excellent a quality as I ever tasted in my time. By a hint dropt from you before, and only by that, I recognised the beneficent hand of your fellow-traveller, Dr. Calvert, a gentleman whom I have only seen once for a moment, but whom I ought not for a long course of years to cease remembering. How have I deserved this at his hands ? Greater faith I have not found in Israel. Better wine I do believe was not drunk in this century. Pray say all that is handsome to him on my part, and in the dialect, grave or sportful, that you know will suit him best : I am much flattered and obliged ; and know not what to say, or do, except blush almost as red as the liquor.—Another individual too, I find, has sent Malmsey Madeira hither ; addressed to my Wife ! No end of strong drink ? Always new mystery in the doings of men ? If you fall in with this mysterious individual, at any quiet time, pray give him a hint of what I think, for you know it well enough. He is a very strange fellow, I suspect ; and you have the way of him better than I.

Since my return I have been as idle as man could well be. A Book, I suppose, will grow in me if I live

some years. But as yet it lies swimming over Infinity ; sunk beyond sounding in Chaos and Night. Really, I find it a dreadful piece of work, to write anything that is worth writing. One is *alone* too ; every man is alone in that matter, more or less. The difference with me, of this year from last, is that I feel afar off as if the desire and necessity of writing *might* again declare itself in me ; last year it seemed impossible forevermore. You are to consider, moreover, that I am sick, continually dyspeptic, sleepless, weak and sickly while I live in this London. If the gods would grant me bread and water anywhere, with a kind of approximate health ?—The gods know better what they are about, and will do no such thing. However, here is one fact : my American friends have sent me £50 *gained* by the Revolution book in Transatlantic land ; is not that worth noting ? England has not yielded any coin of money, tho' the "first edition," says Fraser, is near done. We shall learn cunning by degrees. But now, with this American fifty pounds, partly for the humour of the thing, I have a real thought of purchasing a horse (my *sole* medicine, with which I am approximately well always), and riding the same, in the name of Heaven. You remember our gallop on the heights of Hampstead ? But in truth I think if I were rightly healthy, rightly as in old young days, I should fly out of the world ; nothing under the Zodiac would contain me.

My Brother, who joined me in Annandale, who followed me hither, and has had much fluctuation in his outlooks since then, is gone for Italy eight days ago ; I expect a Paris Letter from him one of these mornings. He goes to Naples, Physician to his Grace of Buccleuch ; carries messages for you, whom he eagerly counts on meeting somewhere. The good Jack ! He has left me very lonely here for the time being ; but his work, it appears, did not lie here,

one has to follow his work. John Mill also talks of going abroad, one of these days ; to Malta, Mrs. Buller told me. He has got a dyspepsia ; for which his Doctors imagine a winter in some better climate might be effectual at once in this early stage of it. I have small faith in that prognosis ; but Mill naturally hopes in it, and ought to try it, if he can,—which latter circumstance, however, I believe is still uncertain. I have seen simply one half-hour of him since that night when we all parted in Lincoln's Inn Fields. I have not yet read his Article on *Durham*, even ; whom indeed one hears enough of without reading. But, speaking of Articles, will you signify to the writer of *Simonides*¹ that he seems to be considered a brilliant man, and ought to take care of himself. A right brilliant set of colours he does carry on his palette ; brilliant as rainbow ; and has made a little enamel picture of the life, locality, action and speech of that old Greek, such as it does one good to read. Had he but, here as in other cases, stood by his prose ! I incline to call it his best piece of prose, this enamel painting ; but, for the verse—*ach Gott !* I have read also the first portion of the *Onyx Ring* :² but why preternaturally ; could you not have done without the miracle of the ring, all but just as well ? On the whole, I will repeat to this author that the palette has colours of the rainbow on it ; that he must draw a *figure* worthy of them and be memorable enough. O Heavens, could the “sheet-lightning,” with its far-darting coruscations and diamond play of colours, but concentrate itself,—what a bolt were there ; fit to pierce mountains ! I commit him to his Good Genius ; we shall see what *is* in him, whether this too. Adieu, my dear

¹ Sterling's article in the *London and Westminster Review*, autumn, 1838. Reprinted by Archdeacon Hare in *Sterling's Essays and Tales*, vol. i. pp. 188–251.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii. pp. 394–649.

Friend ! The world has not many men in it for whom I care half as much. Be happy, grow well, and let me see you again. I am to leave "three lines." Adieu,

T. CARLYLE.

[P.S. by Mrs. Carlyle.] My dear *Mentor*,—Would to Heaven I had anything to tell you of myself which you would like to hear ! But, alas, as Edward Irving used to say, with a *wae* look and a great puff of a sigh, when he was about to write "*pessime*" on my tasks, thereby devoting me, poor innocent "*child of his intellect*," to a sound whipping : "I am sorry for you Jane ; but I *must* be truthful !" Then down went the fatal word, and the whipping followed sure as death. So now, come what come may, I also must be truthful and declare to you honestly that within as without the "*meliora*" still "*latent*" ;¹—nay, that very often the whole faith of me is hardly adequate to believe that they *are* at all. This is a *pessime* which you will *think* deserves worse than whipping ; but you will *feel* nevertheless that it is not you that could hurt a hair of my head. I know your heart is well affected towards me, and when you say hard things to me, that it is, as the man says in the Play, "because I love you, I study how I may best break your heart." That is the comfortablest theory of all your scoldings, &c., &c., and so by Heaven's blessing I will keep it.

¹ *Meliora latent* (better things lie hid) was the motto on a seal which Mrs. Carlyle sometimes used. Possibly her use of it in the above P.S. prompted Sterling to write the following pretty verses :—

"*Meliora latent* ever ;
 Better than the Seen lies hid :
 Time the curtain's web will sever,
 And will raise the casket's lid.
 Thus from earth's immediate sorrow
 Toward the skyey future turn,
 And from its unseen tomorrow
 Fill today's exhausted urn."

Give my affectionate regards to Mrs. Crawford :
I miss her exceedingly here.—Ever yours,
[J. W. C.]

LETTER 85

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

19th June, 1839.

MY DEAR STERLING,

Your Letter arrives this morning ; many thanks to you for it. Mrs. Strachey, whose Letter perhaps accompanied yours in some frank hitherward, writes in raptures about you ; rapture of admiration, but also of anxiety—as to your health breaking down. My dear fellow, you must positively learn the great art of *sitting down* ; of keeping yourself alive for the sake of us all. “*Asseyez-vous, mes enfans !*”—“*Monseigneur, il n’y a pas de quoi !*” The good lady does not see how you can subsist with such perpetual vivacity of movement (so charming to her too) ; nor do I ;—tho’ I know the feline *toughness* of the subject withal ; and persist in asserting continually that he will one day *discover* a sufficient “*de quoi*” (much to his astonishment), and become one of the finest fellows extant in these parts. Seriously, I like very ill to hear of the “*blister*” ; and will keep silent about it, in hopes of better things speedily.

The American *Miscellanies*, part first, have arrived “in the River” ; part second to follow in perhaps six weeks. You do the writer honour in hesitating to strike into him. When did a reviewer pause for “not understanding” ? By the nature of him, *he* understands what thing you will, and the end of his log-line is the bottom of all manner of waters. You will never get on in that way.¹—But as to this

¹ Sterling was now meditating the writing of an article on Carlyle’s *Miscellaneous Essays*. See *post*, p. 223.

Miscellany man, I do confess him questionable. None of the intelligiblest of men, not he ; yet perhaps with a kind of meaning in him too (poor devil), which he is struggling to express and get out of him as he can ! Better let him rest on his own basis for a while ? Safer I do believe. And yet Sterling was never known as a *prudent* man, timid, or even cautious. My bet is that the very hazard will pique him into the adventure ; and there will be nothing but limbs flying before long. Nobody can say.

We have a whole cargo of American celebrities here in these days. Miss Sedgwick, the "divine Miss Sedgwick," whom I have not yet got eye on : she is herself a host. Yesterday Milnes¹ gave us breakfast in honour of Webster, the Washington Senator. Sir Stratford Canning, Hallam, Sir R. Inglis, &c.; and Webster actually there "in the old country" ! I will warrant him one of the stiffest logic-buffers and Parliamentary athletes anywhere to be met with in our world at present. A grim, tall, broad-bottomed, yellow-skinned man, with brows like precipitous cliffs, and huge black dull wearied unwearable-looking eyes under them ; amorphous, projecting nose ; and the angriest shut mouth I have anywhere seen ;—a droop on the sides of the upper lip is quite mastiff-like, magnificent to look upon, it is so quiet withal. I guess I should like ill to be that man's nigger ! However, he is a right clever man in his way ; and has a husky sort of fun in him too ;—drawls, in a handfast, didactic manner, about "our republican institutions," &c., &c., and so plays *his* part.

Thirlwall, they whisper, is going to be wedded, or rather to wed. I passed a long evening at Spedding's, where he was a main figure lately. Very pleasant ; free and easy ; with windows flung up and tobacco *ad libitum* : a most sarcastic, sceptical,

¹ Richard Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton).

but strong-headed, strong-hearted man, whom I have a real liking for. Milnes gave us dilettante Catholicism, and endured Thirlwall's tobacco. I regret to say the business, which seemed so innocent, consisting only of talk, tobacco, and a cup of black tea, proved again noxious to the nervous-system, destructive of sleep and creature-comfort for two days ensuing.—Enough of all this.

What I had to say is, that probably we are off for Scotland some time within the next fortnight. Future movements undecided ; but you shall hear of them. Our address will be always known at Knightsbridge. We are bound for Mrs. Welsh's, "Templand, Thornhill, Dumfries, N.B.," which is to be our headquarters : but whether we loiter a few days in Cumberland and Westmoreland on the way thither, is not yet made out. My Mother's is distant a day's drive. We depend on seeing the heats over there. I mean to read about the "working classes," if there be any book discoverable or pamphlet on that subject worth reading,—which is not the case hitherto. My Brother is on his way to Ischl (not far from Salzburg), had got as far as Florence, is probably in the Tyrol heights today. Lastly it seems *decided* that I am to have a horse ; and, in that case, the likelihood becomes very considerable that I shall actually ride it out to Clifton some time or other, and then all round Clifton with the landlord of the place there,—a man whom *you* would like if you knew *him* !

Your brave Brother is here, looking better than ever. We partly expect him this evening. No word of Mill. My Wife salutes you, and your Wife and household. Adieu, dear Sterling ; we all love you.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

Will you walk over with my kindest respects and thanks to Mrs. Strachey, till I have time to

write them more at large. I expect you will get very fond of her, were you once acquainted. No more earnest-hearted woman ever came across me in my pilgrimage.

That Note is to the mad breakfasting Lion-hunter, "Rev. Montagu," who invites me to come out to *him*!

Or what if I should take the horse *straightway*, and ride over to you with your Brother, and ride about with you both, for a week while the packing goes on here,—altogether at my ease! An odd bed does certainly exist somewhere; here I shall do little good, except while I sleep. If Anthony will consent to take horse *with me*? I will speak to him this very night; he will tell you the issue.—Is not that a bright idea?

LETTER 86

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

29th September, 1839.

MY DEAR STERLING,

Your good Letter, after some detours, found me at my Mother's in Annandale; most languid, vacant, not to say altogether torpid and closed up in melancholy remembrances, sad aspects, sad prospects, and continual deluges of wet weather. Solitude is indispensable to my existence now and then; it is very miserable, yet a kind of blessed misery, with a wholesomeness in it, the beginning of a time more wholesome than the past was.

Your Welsh excursion, and child's idyll with your Brother, came like a sunny place into that dim Hades of mine. You take those matters more wisely than I.

The reason of my not writing answer was mainly

a grand scheme I had of soon speaking an answer. It was among our projects that my Wife, who in her sail from Liverpool to Annan nearly gave up the ghost and altogether declared she would never go to sea again, should proceed homeward by Carlisle and the Preston Railway ; leaving me to come at a week's distance, round by Dublin, Bristol, Clifton, and so see Sterling, and find the dilapidated Chelsea establishment somewhat set up again first. But the poor Dame gave in, when it came to the point ; would like *so* much better, if, &c. : whereupon we got together into the huge Steam mystery, and it snorted off with us (under cloud of night) like an enormous diabolic fire-dragon as it is, and in the most unintelligible yet unerring way, set us down at Chelsea next morning, *without* any sight of Sterling. I have waited since then, a fortnight or more now, till the suspicious *Sterling Article*¹ should appear, that I might see whether I was to excommunicate the man, or what I was to do with him. Mill, the day before yesterday, gave me unexpectedly a copy, which I have read, which I have even sent off into Scotland ; and now I write—the excommunication that is needed.

Mill says this is the best thing you ever wrote ; and truly so should I, if you had not shut my mouth. It is a thing all glowing and boiling, like a furnace of molten metal. A brave thing, nay a rash and headlong ; full of generosity, passionate insight, lightning, extravagance and Sterlingism : such an “article” as we have not read for some time past ! It will be talked of, it will be admired, condemned, and create astonishment and give offence far and near. My friend, what a notion you have got of *me* !

¹ This article was entitled “On the Writings of Thomas Carlyle,” and came out in the *London and Westminster Review*, autumn 1839. It was reprinted in *Sterling's Essays and Tales*, by Archdeacon Hare, vol. i. pp. 252–381.

I discern certain natural features, the general outline of shape ; but it is as one would in the Air-giant of the Harz, huge as Ophiuchus ;¹ painted there, as one finds, by sunrise and early vapour, that is, by Sterling's heart impinging on you between himself and the *Westminster Review* ! I do not thank you ; for I know not whether such things are good, nay whether they are not bad and a poison to one : but I will say there has no man in these Islands been so reviewed in my time ; it is the most magnanimous eulogy I ever knew one man utter of another man whom he knew face to face, and saw go grumbling about there, in coat and breeches, as a poor concrete reality—very offensive now and then. And so we will let it lie there ; incredible to all men, incrediblest of all to me ; yet sweet in the highest degree, for very obvious reasons, notwithstanding.

I admire the ingenuity with which this Reviewer contrives withal to introduce the quarrels he has against me. Not a crow we have ever had to pluck together but he plucks it here, and scatters the limbs of it triumphantly to the winds. I swear honestly I like him all the better. "Consciousness," "Silence," &c., &c. I tell you, my dear fellow, you are right ; and yet I myself am perfectly right too, and know not well yet how I could find terms to express myself in, less liable to contradiction. It is the fault, as Shandy said, of "the auxiliary verbs." Goethe's saying comes often in my mind : "We begin to err, the first *word* we utter." For Nature is solid, with six sides ; Language is superficial, nay linear. I believe you have me, however, in regard to Mother Cagliostro and the gold ounces ; I had read that passage wrong, and yet, as I remember, not without

¹ Ophiuchus, the serpent-holder, a constellation in the northern heavens.

"Like a comet burned,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In th' arctic sky." (*Paradise Lost*, ii. 708-10.)

some misgiving as to the truth.¹ With regard to *September Massacring*, again, you are wrong, and I will prove it—by silence at present. Wrong indeed ! Where are you *right*, if one come to that ? God help you, my man, with such a huge Brocken-Spectre “Chimera” and lot of “Cub chimeras” sucking at her ! I would not be in your shoes for something.

Mill, whom I had not seen till that day at the India House, was looking but indifferently ; he professed not to be sensibly better at all by his last-year’s journeying. Mrs. Taylor, he farther volunteered to tell me, is living not at the old abode in the Regent’s Park, but in Wilton Place, a street where as I conjecture there are mainly wont to be *Lodgings*. Can it be possible ? Or if so, what does

¹ This refers to a passage, in Carlyle’s *Cagliostro*, translated from the Works of Goethe, wherein he describes his interviews with Count Cagliostro’s sister in Palermo, from whom he learned that her rascally brother had cheated her out of “fourteen gold ounces” (estimated by Sterling at about £50). Goethe, generously and kindly, decided to pay her (a poor widow, with three children dependent on her) the value of these gold ounces ; but on reaching his inn, or lodgings, he found that he had not sufficient cash with him ; and, as his itinerary would not allow him to wait in Palermo to get more money from Germany, he was obliged to leave that city without paying the widow. Goethe’s statement that he had to go on his way without paying, comes very near the end of a long passage, and it would seem that Carlyle had failed to notice it ; for he adds at the end of his translated passage : “Shall we not hope at least that the fourteen gold Ounces were paid, by a sure hand, and so her heavy burden, for some time, lightened a little ?” In his next edition, Carlyle, misled by Sterling’s criticism, added a further sentence to the one cited above : “Alas, no, it would seem ; owing to accidents, not even that !” At some later date, however, Carlyle got fresh light on the subject ; for, on looking into Mrs. Carlyle’s beautiful gift copy of the *Miscellanies* (Third Edition, 1847), I was surprised and pleased to find that Carlyle had himself struck out the sentence, “Alas, no, it would seem ; owing to accidents, not even that !” and written the following marginal note, in explanation and justification of his original text : “*Viehoff*, iii. 69 (two sums, successively sent from Weimar).”

I have not seen *Viehoff’s Biography of Goethe* ; but Carlyle’s erasure and marginal note clearly prove that he had learned from it that the “sure hand,” Goethe, had, at some time or other, actually paid the poor widow the “fourteen gold ounces.”—For proof that Carlyle was right, see *Goethe’s Werke*, ii. 352 (*zweite Abthl.*), Stuttgart und Tübingen (1837).

it betoken? I am truly sorry for Mill: he has been a most luckless man since I came hither, seeming to himself all the way to be a lucky one rather. He seems to fear that the Review will have to cease; a thing I regret but do not wonder at. . . . He has no skill in "concrete realities," or less than I ever saw in a man so skilful about abstractions. Nature and Fact, as you remarked, first tell a man the truth about his philosophy. Sow real wheat on the honest earth, you reap real wheat; sow chaff ever so *like* wheat, the earth receives it, but says nothing about it next year.

As for me, I have been busy daily, revising *Wilhelm Meister*, which they are reprinting (*Apprenticeship* and *Travels* together) as rapidly as they can. I dissent greatly from much that I find; yet everywhere there is truth, real truth even in what you hate, and it is good for you to see it; there is real talent, to me the infallible symptom of all other sorts of reality, sorts of worth, for no real thing is not worthy—you know! Fraser has got to hand the American *Miscellanies*, and sold 100 of them; regrets immensely that he has got so few still to sell. I sent your Mother a copy, not you one; I intend for you a better *English* copy, such as seems possible and probable by and by. What I am to do for the winter is all uncertain. This *Meister* business will keep me busy for three weeks yet. I am far from ready to write on anything. My Brother, in Scotland at present, is coming soon; *unbestimmt* he too. We see your people as often and gladly as ever; that is to say, therefore *more* gladly, so precious is *continuance*, in a world like ours. Your Father had bad news from you yesterday: nothing serious we *will* hope. Take care of yourself, do not wear yourself to pieces. You are too vehement, mind that always. My Wife is charmed, as the female character may well be, with your review. She salutes you a hundred times;

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you, and your better half and household. Good be always with you all !

T. CARLYLE.

I have heard twice from Emerson, mainly about books and shipments, the good Emerson. He is getting forward with something of his own to be published soon. In one of his Letters he says : " I have only time to say that I love Sterling's poetry, that I admire his prose with reservations here and there. What he knows he writes manfully and well. All our readers here take *Blackwood* for his sake, and latterly seek him in vain."—This you see was not designed for you, but I cabbage it.

LETTER 87

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

6th January, 1840.

MY DEAR STERLING,

It is but three or four days since I became fully aware that this Madeira business was to be more than a theory ; that it was actually to take effect, and carry you away across the seas from me again !¹ I grieve heartily at this result. It seemed to me the days were growing long, the spring and summer coming ; that Sterling would run over hither, and I over thither ; that we should gallop together, and argue together ; that we should, &c., &c. Alas, my dear fellow, we cannot make head against these things ; Boreas and the climate of England are stronger than we ! However, Calvert tells me he

¹ Sterling did not go to Madeira at this time. By land he had got to Falmouth, his port of embarkation, but boisterous weather forbade sailing, and he remained here till the spring, when he returned to Clifton once more.

has no reason to think your health in any fundamental danger ; he expects to bring you back triumphant in three months : and *then* ! It seems to me you must come to Knightsbridge ; you must get a *horse* ; I shall have a horse ; there will be such a series of equestrian and palestric exercises gone thro' as the English summer has seldom witnessed ! Ask Calvert if galloping on horseback is not the method of getting to be *at rest*—for a character like you ! I will cheer myself with these dreams ; knowing well enough that much which is possible cannot be, any more than if it were impossible ; knowing it on all sides *too* well. We will hope nevertheless ; my wishes and prayers shall go with you over the waste sea-flood ; nothing can prevent *them* from going at any rate.

Your volume of Poems was duly delivered here the other day ; along with the copy for Emerson, which latter I straightway despatched by Covent Garden Kennet the Bookseller. Your Letter, which was also despatched long months ago, has had no answer yet ? I too have heard nothing from E. these four months ; Miss Martineau wrote some time ago that he was “fallen into a very strange state in regard to External Nature” ; taking it upon him, as I understood, to deny that poor old External Nature existed at all, “otherwise than relatively” ;—a most questionable state in these times in these latitudes ! Milnes is about reviewing him, I understand, in the next *London and Westminster* ; we shall see what comes of that.

As to our own Volume, which my Wife vehemently claims as *hers*, I find that the Title page without any “Revd.” upon it is much to my mind ; the pieces I think are all known to me before ; and detestable as all rhyme or most rhyme is to me, I mean to read several of them a second time. You know my notions about *singing* of thought, how heterodox, one-sided,

contracted-emphatic, &c., &c., they are ; and yet, on the whole, they stand rigid only as practical precepts for my own self, not rigid at all on *thys*elf or on his self. I fancy there are many men who will like emotions of that sort set forth in a vehicle of that sort ; so accordingly let them be set forth. Surely if all the volumes of British Literature printed in 1839 were ranked in a long row, as long as Piccadilly, and ordered peremptorily to give account of themselves, Why they existed ? Why they should not instantly be made into bandboxes ?—there are few or none of them that could tell a better story for themselves than this same volume by Moxon.¹ Nay farther, I have read the Hymns in the last *Blackwood*, and like them better than any verses I have seen of yours,—or I may say of any other body's for a long while ! Is not this fair play on my part ? Go on and prosper, till you either get into free Infinitude, or find yourself, as Goethe says, *Zurückgeprallt* ! Either way it will be for real and indispensable profit to you.

As for myself my flight at present is very low ; or rather I should say my *roost*, for I do not try flying at all. *To be let alone* is the uttermost ambition of my soul in these times and circumstances. The speech of men for most part is a jargon and platitude to me ; with which, why should I quarrel ? The far easier way were to keep well out of the road of it ; which by the blessing of Heaven one can in a tolerable measure do. I still mourn for the want of Books ; wish I had *you* here to institute a Library for me. I read Eichhorn's *Altes Testament* ; endeavour to glean an image of some *thing* here and there from that goodly heap of shadows of things. Neal's *Puritans* I have from Maurice ; a very considerably stupider book : *ach Gott*, it is a sin for men to write stupid books, and afflict their fellow-creatures with

¹ Sterling's publisher.

half-centuries after they are dead ! Really this is true : a man ought to separate chaff from wheat, were it with never such pain to himself, that so thousands of other persons may not have the pain,—may not at last find it too hard a pain and fling *the whole concern* into the chaff-heap !

There was a copy of my pamphlet on *Chartism* left for you, in patient expectation of the Sterlingian censure. Your Father will take it, I suppose. Fox and the Radicals give tongue, vituperative-astonished ; yesterday I read on some Newspaper Placard in big letters, “ Carlyle’s Cant on Chartism ” ; my Brother was for stepping in to buy the Newspaper, but I decisively said No. I have had too much bother with the miserable rag of a thing already ; correcting proofs, higgling and arranging. It is as bad as you like : but it utters in some way a thing that has been burning in the stomach of me these ten years, parts of it these twenty years : behold it is *out* ; what more have *I* to do with it ? To sweep it altogether out of my memory too : *schlag’ es mir aus dem Sinne* ! The Devil and the world have now to play their part or no-part with it ; mine is played.

At this point the Postman with fateful double knock delivers your Letter from Clifton ! Thousand thanks, my kind friend ; I did not expect you to take such trouble with me, and meant to say you need not in the pressure of so many other troubles. Your illness seems to have been far more grievous than I had interpreted from so many confused accounts. Get well, and come back with Calvert : this is what you will and shall do in spite of all hypochondria. “ *Verfehltes Leben* ” ! Foolish youth ; your Life is not *verfehlt*, not a bit of it ! It is not yet so much as started, either for failure or success : there have hitherto been only preliminary flourishes of trumpets (very promising in their kind) before the true *heroic poem* could commence ; many variations do but

announce that much is in the man to utter, that he knows not well at once how to utter it. Courage, my brother ! There is nothing at all lost yet ; and there is the whole world still to win. I speak this advisedly. If I could persuade the man to sit quiet and silent (*silent*, I say, you ——!)¹ for a twelvemonth or so, and do nothing at all but let the aeriform become liquid and solid, I would back him against the British Empire ! That too will come ; I never doubt it.

And so go in good hope, and return to us well and joyful. The clay is a dolorous prison many ways to all of us ; ah me ! But you do learn what the limits of it are ; and *can* then walk about a little without breaking your head on the walls. My Brother sends his wishes with you : he is still here ; but on terms for a new place somewhat like his old one. My Wife salutes you as a Sister taking leave. Good winds go with you, and bring you back soon. God bless you always, dear John !

Your ever affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 88

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

11th April, 1840.

MY DEAR STERLING,

In the present vigorous state of the Penny Postage it does often seem to me a blameable anomaly

¹ Before this time Sterling had, perhaps unconsciously and without admitting it to Carlyle, fallen in with his opinion of the great benefits derivable from silence, about which they had argued long and vehemently. For Sterling writes in his "Essay on Simonides" (*London and Westminster*, 1838) : "He [Simonides] was an admirer of silence, like all men of very eminent thoughtfulness, and probably, like many of them, must often have smiled at his own volubility in praise of it. He said that he had often repented of speaking, but never of holding his tongue."

that we should speak to one another so very seldom on paper. The date of your Letter is at a most wasteful distance from that of the preceding one. The blame is half mine, you say? Perhaps so, perhaps not; but alas, how does that help us either way! Alas, the noise of this insanity of an existence in London City is like to tear me in shreds at any rate; oftenest I can undertake to do nothing whatever but try to hold my peace and keep alive in the middle of it all! Is it not a pity, meanwhile, that the few *articulate* voices of our Planet were so widely scattered, at Falmouth and elsewhere; that the smoke of the torment of this my Cockney-Tophet went up in such wise; alas, that our old Planet generally were such a mad old business—?—One other thing only I shall complain of: the dreadful hand you write; mysterious as Odin's *runes*; as if one were listening to a loved voice passionately thro' the jangle of marrow-bones and cleavers!

Your mood in writing that Letter is too well known to one other man, my friend! Take comfort: nothing so sinister lies in it; the *creative virtue* acts in that manner too,—in black whirlwinds and snow and thunder-storms, before green worlds and bright summer suns disclose themselves. I fancy that the end of all this, one day or another, one year or another, will be a beautiful *Book*; much nearer contenting you than anything you have yet done. Believe it. We think the fruitful Earth is *doing nothing*, if we do not *see* yellow wheat on the surface, and men busy reaping the same. We are fools. The worthy Earth was never idle at all; was busiest of all, when the foolish husbandman, passing by, said that she lay wasting, rotting, an idle unprofitable thing. *Festina lente* is a word I would write over Sterling's door-posts, and the *lente* in double Roman capitals.

My own winter and spring have passed,—I cannot tell you how; I could break forth into excommuni-

cating to tell you how ! Proofsheets, foolish visits, foolish books,—not many even of these. *N'en parlons pas*. And now next week comes out a Prospectus of *Lectures*, to my mind at present one of the fearfulest enterprises man ever engaged in. "On Heroes, Hero-worship and the Heroic"—from Odin down to Robert Burns ! Literally so. But you shall have the Prospectus itself next week ; suspend your wonder till then.

For above a month past I have had a horse, and been diligently, wellnigh daily, using it. The world gets green again, the heaven blue again ; I feel, often and often, Had I but Sterling here !

The *Westminster Review* has come into the hands of Cole and Hickson ; to be conducted on new principles ! What words are adequate ? No words.

My wife has been poorly during all this east wind ; is getting better now ; busy, this day, making marmalade ; sends you and yours many kind salutations. Blessings with you always, my dear Friend !

T. CARLYLE (in great haste).

LETTER 89

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

15th April, 1840.

MY DEAR STERLING,

There was nothing wrong in our correspondence, so far as the Postman was concerned : he, poor man, had done faithfully what little duty we entrusted to him. My phraseology had misled you ; it did not mean that I had written more, but that you, with your gifts, opportunities, &c., &c. (had Fortune aided) should not have written so little ! It meant, at bottom, that I desire excessively to be spoken to, by a character like you,—provided you

would ask no speech from me ; a modest desire ; beseeching the Harpocrates-Stentor you were once pleased to say was my name.

Here is a Lecture-Prospectus ; sufficient to create some apprehension in the old Ruer, I hope. Poor old fellow, he escapes innumerable risks, with that ominous potentiality of his ; but still remains in fact *unburnt*.—For avoiding ruts, and all other mischances, what hope have I ! On the whole, I had rather *not* have you for a hearer this year ; tho' I pray daily you would come and ride with me. The summer has burst forth suddenly ; in a few days, the woods will all have their new jackets on ; already it is a very blessedness to see the unfathomable blue above one, the young green around,—and London lying like a great black *Malebolge* filling only half the Heaven, at a safe distance from one. For two hours daily I feel like the Starling that *had* got out.—You will not come ; it would be too pretty if you did ! Heaven love you, coming or staying. We both of us salute you in all affection.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

My very kind regards to Mrs. Strachey. Is not Montagu very much of an ass, with that loud throat of his ?

LETTER 90

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

3rd July, 1840.

DEAR STERLING,

Before parting with this Horse of mine, as I have now nearly resolved to do, it seems to me a question, whether I ought not first to take a free ride on the quadruped, and survey with my own

eyes some section of English land, better than a *sedes exploratoria* on the Coach-roof will, were one never so intent upon it? Many times has such a purpose been in me; and who knows whether I am likely soon or ever to have a better opportunity? The thing does go thro' my head occasionally; and at the category *Whitherward?* you will not wonder that Clifton, and an unreasonable Friend of mine there, should turn up oftener than any other place whatever. Well: what are you doing; what think you of this thing; will you have anything to do with it, or at all relate yourself to it, except by an "unblameable passivity" alone? Speak a word, if you have leisure. A word on this, will at least be a word: no word at all is the worst way of it from you.—But indeed, I know not whether I should at bottom invite you to speak, or have myself spoken; the practical chances are so small: this is the real truth! Were you *here*, booted and road-ready to go with me, I do indeed believe I should go at once, and be benefited by going. But you are not here; it is four days of a solitary ride:—cannot you *meet* me about Stonehenge, or somewhere, to encourage my heart! Alas, I get so dyspeptical, melancholic, half-mad in the London summer, all courage to do anything but hold my peace fades away; I dwindle into the pusillanimity of the ninth part of a tailor; feel as if I had nothing I could do, but "die in my hole like a poisoned rat." *Ach Gott!* However, I take shipping usually; find that there is fresh everlasting sea-water; rivers, mountains, simple peaceful men; that God's universe is *not* wholly an accursed dusty deafening distraction of a Cockneydom;—and so get some strength again by and by! I will let you speak or not speak, as you like; that is the best rule.

Your Letter, by your lady Mother, which was dated 4th of June, did not get here above a week

ago ; it had lain at the bottom of a travelling-bag, I guess ! Fox is a fine open-souled young man ; one wishes him right well in his clear wholesome Quakerism,—but sees not entirely how he is to get it *kept* in these times, and grow as he seems minded to do. They are all good people ; we saw them at Mill's. Their admiration for a certain Sterling amounts to the Transcendental.

The review of you in the *Quarterly* is welcome to all friends ; significant then and now ; but not in itself of much significance. I found the praise rather underdone,—stingy, one might have called it ; the advice given, or implied, not good. Why, man, *I* with a safe conscience could have praised your Poems far more ; and yet, behold, I would have repeated with emphasis the old precept to write Prose ! You must pick your way, out of conflicting cackle of all kinds ; *you* for yourself, my Friend ; as we all have to do. A brave manly goal, if you err not all-*too* unconscionably, is surely possible.

Here is the Horse ; the Groom's inexorable knock. No word more. Adieu, adieu !

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 91

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

12th November, 1840.

MY DEAR STERLING,

Your Poem is full of talent, and full of faults. I wish to Heaven I could give you some wise word of advice about it :—but indeed, would you have the smallest chance to follow such advice if given ? I have read this *Election* with much more entertainment than I ever before read any Poem of yours. Nay,

at bottom, it is perhaps almost the only Piece, especially of such length, that I could, independently of my regard for the writer, have read *with* real entertainment. In spite of the rhyme, in spite of the afflictive snakishly ambiguous hand (the *s* not knowing whether it will turn out an *n* or an *m* or a *u* !), I found the reading of this thing not a duty but a pleasure. So much from me, you will admit, is a great deal.

I do not yet find a *musical tune* in either the soul or the body of this Piece ; but the rhyme flows evenly along, does not *much* obstruct the grammatical perspicacity ; and in the burlesque parts the jingle of it at the end of the lines has a gratifying effect on me. I, even I, find some benefit in rhymes on such occasions. The serious passages again, which in themselves are the truest as well as far the worthiest, I could have liked better to see still in prose,—if it were Sterlingian prose. This is the naked truth ; tho' you will not believe much of it, but will only believe that I believed it. For the rest, I like the burlesque too, think it good of its kind, and that, as I said, the rhyme has a good effect on it. But in the *serious* there struggles a great meaning, seizable here only in straggling glimpses, obstructed altogether by the form of the composition, and generally out of place when you do seize it.

The Master-fault of the Piece, hear it my Friend with a frown, is, as ever, that it is *too easily born*. Could I enwrap *you* in *one* of the thick atrabiliary cloaks-of-darkness that envelop my poor self, cloak above cloak, till my light seems quenched for most part as in London fog, and all utterance of myself is so inexpressibly difficult, inexpressibly hateful,—what a fellow I should make of you ! I would sink this Piece down into the *Orcus* of your soul, and it should not spring up but with a fight at every step ; and arise at last a shorter and wiser Poem ! But it may not be. Who knows how much of your gift

were inconsistent with such wrappings and practices, and might expire in such handling?

As it stands, your *Story* in this *Election* is eminently loose-jointed, improbable, not to say incredible; your *earnest* does not cohere with your *sport* (indeed they would be terribly difficult to make cohere well), the *earnest* is too long, and nothing to the purpose in hand, for most part;—in short, the whole thing coheres very loosely, or is incoherent; and only by natural worth of material *forces* some pleasure on you,—no inconsiderable pleasure.

On the whole, what is to be done? I am clear that the thing see the light, under one condition or another. As a separate volume in its present form, I should say, questionable, or even unquestionable. Will Blackwood print it? It might do better there than elsewhere; if, as is perhaps likely, you want no more trouble with it. I know not that I would recommend *very* much more trouble now; you have my thoughts above, as to that, pro and contra. Consider, however (even for Blackwood), whether your young lady, whom I decidedly like, would not be better to have a longer *shift* on her, if indeed she have rightly any shift at present! Whether Vane's *Life* be not for most part a superfetation; far too long, for anything he ever did or suffered; eminently unsuitable for *courting* with, &c., &c.

On the whole, and this is the sum of my advice, take *deep* and ever deeper counsel with yourself, what it is that will really give *you* most satisfaction in the ordering of this business (to print or not to print); and account that a greater fact than any other,—if you can once ascertain it well. Do you really from the heart like this thing; or do you merely think and hope that others may like, &c.? Doctors say the *real* voice of the appetite is the best rule in Dietetics; but it has to be carefully discriminated from the superficial, transient, fallacious

voice, which declares for gingerbread, peppercake, comfits and the like !

You see what a pen I have ; in what impetuous velocity I must write ! You have the rudest thoughts of my heart ; all the truer for that, if you can read them. Adieu, my friend ; and a *wise* decision to you, be it in my sense or not in mine.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

P.S.—Do you mean to entitle yourself *the Revd.* J. Sterling still ! It is awfully heterodox much of that quizzing ; tho' to me all the welcomer.

LETTER 92

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Tor, Torquay, Devon.

CHELSEA,

7th December, 1840.

DEAR STERLING,

Thanks for your kind greeting from Torquay. We had heard of your going thither ; and rejoiced greatly that at least you were not to be wafted over the Alps again, but to spend the winter in your own Island. Be content, my Friend. Solitude is not joyful but sad for one of your temper ; yet at bottom there are far more unprofitable things than solitude. How often do I, poor wretch, from amid this inane whirlpool, which seems to be grinding my life to pieces, cry aloud for a hut in the wilderness, with fields round me and sky over me, that on any terms consistent with life at all I might be allowed to live there ! Nay, perhaps I shall verily fly to Craigenputtock again before long. Yet I know what solitude is, and imprisonment among black-cattle and peat-bogs. The truth is, we are never right as we are : “O, the Devil burn it !” said the Irish Drummer

flogging his countryman, "there's no plasing of *you*, strike where one will!"

I commend your improvements of *The Election*, and shall watch with you what the world will say of it. A man has no other course: let him speak his best to mankind; let mankind's response give him farther guidance,—so far as guidance may lie there for him. My regret will be continual that you do not stand by the first-rate *prose* that you could write; but your own feeling is other, the call of your own nature seems to be other: you decidedly must and shall persevere, and *try* till you have ascertained. I feel well that whatsoever I could add on the matter would be impertinences henceforth. I am not infallible either!

My feeling of Harriet Martineau's *Hour and Man* is very similar to your own. A beautiful enthusiasm reigns in it; a half-enviable, half-pitiable faith in Socinian Formulas, beauties of virtue, &c., &c. The banyan does by no means, to my knowledge, grow in the West Indies; indeed I hear there are eminent errors, not a few, of that sort in the Book: but if Shakespeare made seaport in Bohemia without much damage,¹ what should *they* avail? Harriet is unfortunately not in your neighbourhood, but at Tynemouth far in the North. She is a brave creature; full of heart, full of healthy, swift faculty: "God has given to every people a Prophet in its own speech," say the Arabs. For Prophet read Poet; and wonder that even to the Socinian people of England in the nineteenth century the common lot has fallen!

Nickleby I never read, except pieces of it in newspapers: the author I have seen sometimes, not without satisfaction; a kindly-constructed, clear-sighted, good little fellow,—good enough and too good for the course he is flung into here.

My Brother has been with us these two days;

¹ See the *Winter's Tale*, Act III Sc. 3.

today he returns to Ryde : he seems not much in love with his situation, nor very fast tied to it : the great salary, I suppose, is the main blessing of it.¹

As for me, I am much beyond audibility in black deluges, bottomless, shoreless, of Laudism, Rushworthism, Cromwellism, desperate, incomprehensible inanity, and dullness without a name ; a truly pitiable man. Whether anything will ever come of it all, seems more than doubtful. But today I am just returned from a week's mad martyrdom as Special Jurymen, and am one of the miserablest inhabitants of London. Enough !

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 93

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Torquay.

CHELSEA,

10th December, 1840.

DEAR STERLING,

In a corner of your last Note, lies an interrogatory which I, punctual as I wished to be, did *not* answer. A most momentous interrogatory !

The Mr. R——, who struggles vainly to vend his Book by some recommendation of mine, must be a certain D. L. R., an Indian Scotch soldier, now for the second time in Calcutta, who once some years ago, as a Half-pay here, made some efforts as an Editor and Critic ; but not succeeding to his mind, went back to regions of the Sun again. There collecting his *disjecta membra* of Prose and Rhyme, he printed them on dim paper, and sent me a copy. I had never seen his face ; but knew who he was ; found him

¹ Dr. Carlyle was now medical attendant to an Irish gentleman of fortune, mentally ailing and requiring frequent change of scene, advice and almost constant supervision. The salary was large, but the duties were onerous.

an affectionate, melancholy, smooth-spoken man, of decided elegance and ingenuity,—tormented seemingly not a little with many things ; with the need of approbation from his fellow-creatures, for one. I found him really cheerful-tragic reading ; and told him so veraciously, with honest emphasis. He—unhappy man—printed my Letter, had it reprinted here, “on sweet compulsion” ; and I—would write no more. He is now in his second edition, on finer paper ; sends me *two* copies ; one of which, if you will undertake to review it, *you* shall have straightway, and my blessing to boot ! The Newspaper puff, I have small doubt, is extracted from the same luckless Letter. This is the history of R—— ; I am not angry at him : let us pity the poor white man !¹

We like your Verses on *Acre* to a very considerable degree ! My Wife declares them the best you ever made ;—not having seen *The Election* ; being still indeed in a kind of gentle huff about that !

Will you have Scott's² *Syllabus*, to teach you farther how the world wags ? Be a good boy ; and say confidently, “ *Anch' io son pittore*,³ and will prove to them all (the dogs !) that it is a *rhyme* Pittore ! ”

Adieu before the sun fall. I have yet had no walking.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

¹ “ Let us pity the poor white man ;
No mother has he to fetch him milk,
No sister to grind him corn.”

(Mungo Park's *Travels*. See also *Past and Present*, Bk. iii. ch. 13.)

² The Rev. Alexander Scott, of Woolwich, once Edward Irving's assistant. The *Syllabus* was for one of his courses of Lectures.

³ Correggio having come to Rome to see the frescoes of Raphael in the Vatican, gazed on them for a long time, and was heard to exclaim, “ *Anch' io son pittore* ! ” [“ I also am a painter ! ”]. Though at that time comparatively unappreciated by the public, Correggio was not unconscious of his artistic genius.

LETTER 94

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

2nd March, 1841.

DEAR STERLING,

The secret of the Authorship of your *Election* shall not be disclosed by either of us. A nominal incognito, I suppose indeed, is all you aim at ; and indeed is all that could be attained now : but as for us we will let it be as real as it can.

This week past I have been living under the frightfullest despotism of Influenza ;—in bone, muscle, head, heart, soul, body and spirit, one of the most perfect *wrecks* anywhere extant ! Neither does the thing seem in any haste to go away : indeed it is the outcome and culmination of a very extensive set of things which I have painfully had my eye upon for a long while.—You too have been suffering : alas, it is far the saddest fruit of the Fall of Man, this of having a sick body to live in ! There is no remedy in Art that I can hear of : but Nature herself brings one before long.

I have serious thoughts of getting out of London altogether this season, to witness one other Summer before I die. No words can do justice to the abhorrence I feel of this place sometimes. We shall see.

Sartor and the *Hero-Lectures* are both printed, and away from me. With great pleasure I bequeath them both to the Prince of the Power of the Air to work *his* good pleasure with them : it is not probable that he dislikes them much worse than I do,—under many points of view. He is a very useful fellow that Prince ; he tramps you off the husks, in his rough way, and then you see whether there was any kernel and what.

Your Puritan Sermons, many thanks for them, are here. I am at present reading Cleveland, Grey's

Hudibras, &c. By no way can I as yet get any access into the real heart of that thing. Perhaps it hardly any more has any heart for us?

Adieu, dear Sterling! Get well *quam primum*; as will I.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 95

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

NEWBY, ANNAN, N.B.,

4th August, 1841.

DEAR STERLING,

On this desolate strand of the ocean flood, where the memory of all friends revives on one with new distinctness, your good Letter was altogether welcome. Rowland's penny-postage too shall have some praise from us; the one instance as yet, or one of the very few instances, in which mankind have taken the full advantage of that same "crowded civilization," from the overcrowded state of which they suffer so many miseries! Let no sacrilegious Peel lay hands on that.

We have been here now for a matter of ten days, and begin to get accustomed to the singular life we have. Our house is a small dandified fantasticality of a Cottage, almost close upon the gravel of the beach; a footpath, on coarse downs, with gorse, broom, hairy imitation of grass, passes east and west before our windows; behind us is an oat-field now in ear, are fishers' huts and cabins; right in front from this garret window lies all Cumberland, lie Skiddaw, Helvellyn, and a thousand wondrous peaks, known to me from infancy;—at the present moment, all blue and shining in the August sun; oftenest sunk in grey tempest; always worth a look from me. The place is very strange; most lonely;

for three days after our arrival we had no phenomenon at all, but the everlasting roar of loud winds, and the going and coming of the great Atlantic Brine, which rushes up and rushes down, once every twelve hours, since the creation of the world,—never forgetting *its* work ; a most huge, unfortunate-looking thing ; doomed to a course of transcendent monotony, the very image as of a grey objectless Eternity ; the sound of it, like a sublime complaint against ENNUY that had no end nor limits ! To me all this is impressive enough ; wholesome enough : it is solitude unbeautified by any Zimmermann, real solitude. For the rest, I bathe daily, ride often ; drive my Wife, or my Mother, who is with us in these days, to and fro in frail vehicles of the gig species. It is a savage existence for most part, not unlike that of gypsies ;—for example, our groom is a great thick-sided, laughing-faced, redhaired *woman* ; she comes to me, from time to time, with news of inextricable imbroglios in the harness, in the headstalls and hay-rack ; if I could not myself perform, the whole equine establishment would come to a standstill. But none knows me, none ventures to know me ; I roam far and wide in the character of ghost (a true *revenant*) : such gypsydom I often liken to the mud-bath your sick rhinoceros seeks out for himself, therein to lie soaking for a season ; with infinite profit to the beast's health, they say !—In three weeks or less this will probably be at an end. *Majora canamus.*

What you say of Emerson is not entirely without some echo in myself : accordingly, I love his Book not for its detached opinions, not even for the scheme of the general world he has framed for himself, or any eminence of talent he has expressed that with : but simply because it is his own Book ; because there is a tone of *veracity*, an unmistakable air of its being *his* (wheresoever he may have found, discovered,

borrowed or begged it), and a real utterance of a human soul, not a mere echo of such. I consider it, in that sense, highly remarkable ; rare, very rare in these days of ours. *Ach Gott*, it is frightful to live among echoes ! All that I have "done" for poor Ralph Waldo, accordingly, is to express that sentiment in a short and very crabbed Preface ; and allow James Fraser to reprint the work for his own behoof and Waldo's (if for any one's behoof !) with that *imprimatur* on it ; which poor Fraser was most anxious to do, without farther trouble of mine. The few that read the Book, I imagine, will get benefit of it. To America, I sometimes say, this Emerson, such as he is, seems to me like a kind of *new era* : really in any country all sunk crown-deep in *Cant*, Twaddle, and hollow Traditionality, is not the first man that will begin to speak the truth, *any* truth, a new and newest era ?—There is no likeness of the face of Emerson that I know of ; I fancy he never yet was engraved : poor fellow, it lies among his liabilities, to be engraved yet, to become a sect-founder, and go partially to the Devil in several ways,—all which may the kind Heavens forbid ! What you ask about my likeness in the Exhibition is unanswerable : the thing belongs to one Laurence, a young artist of great promise as yet all unripe ; the thing, so frightful was it, and I suppose is it, shall forever belong to him ! I likened it, four months ago when I struck work in *sitting*, to a compound of the head of a Demon and of a flayed Horse ;—*infandum, infandum* !

I am really anxious to see what you have made of Strafford. But for Heaven's sake, do have it copied into some entirely legible type of handwriting before you send it to me : in that amazing alphabet of yours, all like innumerable "pairs of spectacles" laid out in line (you careless fellow !), I can enjoy nothing. You shall have as faithful a verdict as I can give. You will know of yourself, my Friend,

whether it is right or not ; no other verdict is worth the hundredth part of one's own, if that be actually a verdict.—My good Sterling, you have a beautiful talent in you ; alas, it is such a business finding out what way to express that in ! You will find better and better, if you seek ; that is all that can be said of any mortal. To our loud passionate questionings, What must I do ? What must I do to be saved ?—there do come answers, right audible, tho' in the smallest, lowest voice, which one must listen to with open ear, with patient humble heart, or one will never hear them,—any more than the most do. Courage : the battle is well worth fighting, if battle ever was !—God bless you, my man ; I love you very well always. Remember me to Signor Hurricane, the good Father and Thunderer, if he is still near you. My Wife would send her love to both of you ; but is not here, is not well today, poor little woman. She has bathed but once, and, that time, hurt her ankle to lameness on an ugly stone of the beach. Adieu.

Yours ever affectionately,

T. CARLYLE.

P.S.—Did you hear of Bookseller Knight's failure ; and the stoppage of *Useful Knowledge* ?

LETTER 96

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

27th September, 1841.

DEAR STERLING,

Infinitely obliged by your Lithograph ;¹ which pours a flood of light for me over the error of my

¹ This "Lithograph" was a facsimile copy of a skit or lampoon by Sterling satirizing Carlyle and some of his doctrines in a way that would have angered a less good-natured man. But Carlyle only laughed at it, and humorously answered it in kind by the two stanzas which follow in this letter.

ways ! By Heaven's mercy we shall not be lost for want of warning. *Humanum est errare ; Sterlingianum edocere.*

Cock-a-doodle-doo, cuck, cuck,
What an ass is Carlyle,
Stood not, on our guide-post stuck,
The invaluable Sterling !

Cock-a-doodle-doo, this, this,
This the road, ye dolts you !
Road to Nowhere not amiss,
Road to Somewhere jolts so !

We are at Chelsea again (as you see), these five days. We hoped to see you this week ; but that, it seems, is given up for a time. God forgive you your sins, and send you soon.

Yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 97

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,
31st October, 1841.

DEAR STERLING,

The news that you had got out of bed again was of all others the welcomest here. You are very kind to think of us in your sickness ; to see us beatified thro' that pale moonlight medium, and to love us as you with your kind heart do ! We heard from your Mother that there was "blistering" afoot again. Happily it is now over for this time : my practical "use of terror" from it (as the Puritan Preachers say) would be, Take double and treble care of yourself in future. That you should be hustled out of Falmouth too, by that scamp of a "Nosology" (a dangerous fellow for us all), were too bad. I bid you work slow, and dress warm.

The Lithograph cockadoodle is not here now, did

not stay here above a day ; packing up a mass of abominable scarecrow effigies of Oxford Puseyites for Thomas Spedding, I found the Lithograph still lying on my table, and put it in by way of salt, to give a kind of savour to the mass, and perhaps keep off putrescence. So Spedding has it,—and who knows accordingly but future ages will have it ! A man must look to that when he lithographs. Prince Posterity is always on the watch withal, if anything be going !

At present, and for the last four weeks, I sit upstairs here, rigorously secret, almost sacred ; no mortal, not the very postman or his knock, admitted till two o'clock. My Wife has swept and garnished the place for me, curtained, carpeted, and window-blinded it, really into civilized habitability for the first time ; and bids me work or perish. I write daily some quantity of things ; which then go into the fire. It is the miserablest kind of task I have, the like of this, which recurs on me duly at intervals. The fire once lit, you have some warmth, tho' it is burning away your life ; but this miserable quasi-fruitless *kindling* of the fire, puff-puffing at it as with a pair of asthmatic bellows—!—The likelihood is, I may fling the bellows down again, and decide upon living, tho' in a shivering state.

By the way, hinting at Books, I must mention a fact as to *The Election : a Poem*. It is generally known here, known or guessed among all your friends at least, that you are the writer of that work. I had mentioned it absolutely to nobody, nor did yet mention it, but everybody knew ;—and as everybody approved, what matter ? thought I. Well, the other evening, a certain John Forster, your Critic in the *Examiner*, was standing by this mantel-piece, gazing for novelties, and said, "Whose medallion is this ?" "Why that is Sterling's, John Sterling's, the author of *The Election*," said I, in a moment of unguardedness !

Forster (whom Lady Bulwer has called "*Fuzbuz*, a man of Brummagem enthusiasm") gave instant sign that he had not already known the secret. What could I do? I swore him to hold his peace; and he, with much laughter, swore,—and will keep his oath according to circumstances, I daresay! What was better than our outlook that way, he stated his intention to give a "second notice" of the Poem, for which he had a great, &c., &c. This Forster is a most noisy man, but really rather a good fellow (as one gradually finds), and with some substance in his tumultuary brains; a proof of which is that Bulwer does seem to be no longer all gold to him, as once was the case, but to give fatal symptoms here and there (to Forster's huge astonishment) of being mere scoured brass.

In conclusion, I must beg of you to trust me with no more secrets of that kind,—secrets which everybody gets to know, and which everybody is liable to be blamed for disclosing; and which, at bottom, might without harm be talked of on the housetops by all men. I have studied to keep this like a masonic word; and yet see, if you do not forgive me, where am I!

You say nothing about *Strafford*; which I infer to mean that the Tragedy still lies in the "pottering furnace," getting the dross, of carbon, earth and extraneous alkalies, burnt out of it; in its geometrical shape no change yet visible. I am not sorry for this. Be *Strafford* what it may, the longer you keep it, my belief is it will grow the better. A "pottering furnace" is expensive to keep up, no doubt of that: but you cannot make steel without one; you make mere pig-iron, not so much as malleable at all! These are truths, my Christian friend; which, if it please the pigs, you shall gradually learn somewhat better.

I agree in nearly every word you say about *Meister*,
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and call your delineation just and vivid, both of that Book and its Author, as they impress one there. Truly, as you say, moreover, one might ask the question, Whether anybody ever did love this man, as friend does friend ; especially, Whether this man did ever frankly love anybody ? I think, in one sense, it is very likely the answer were No, to both questions ; and yet, in another sense, how emphatically, Yes ! Few had a right to “love” this man, except in the very way you mention : nay, what living man had ? Schiller, perhaps to some extent ; and accordingly Schiller did, to something like that extent. One does not *love* the Heaven’s-lightning, in the way of *caresses* altogether ! This man’s love, I take it, lay deep-hidden in him, as fire in the earth’s centre ; at the surface,—since he could not be a Napoleon, did not like to be a broken self-consumed Burns,—what could it do for him ? The earliest instincts of self-culture, I suppose, and all the wider insights he got in the course of that, would alike prescribe for him : Hide all this, *renounce* all this ; all this leads to madness, indignity, Rousseauism, and will forever remain bemocked, ignominiously crucified one way or the other, in this lower earth : let thy love, far hidden, spring up as a Soul of Beauty, and be itself victorious, beautiful ; let *summer-heat* make a whole world verdant,—and if Sterling ask, next century, “But where is your *thunderbolt*, then ?”, Sterling will take another view of it one day !—Actually that seems to me the case. But I want a week of time and a quire of paper to explain myself about it. Also a stock of patience greater, I doubt, than that of my Christian friend’s would be !

Adieu, adieu. Get well, and keep well, my dear Sterling. No danger of our “forgetting” you, of our ever getting “angry” at you.

Yours always,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 98

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Falmouth.

CHELSEA,

26th December, 1841.

DEAR STERLING,

I have read your *Cœur-de-Lion* (Cardalion) with much amusement; occasionally, indeed, with loud laughter testifying the same to bystanders,—or rather to the one by-sitter, the Sorrow of my Life here; to whom I had, in consequence, to read the latter half of the poem aloud! You have got a very notable facility of rhyme; there is also a right lively dancing careless kind of rhythm in this piece, which rattles along like a bundle of hardware going down stairs ever faster, in a manner comfortable to hear. True Sterlingian drollery of heart contrives to show itself thro' the cage-bars of those stanzas; and enamelled tints too of the higher Sterlingian qualities,—caged as they are: alas, all ways of utterance are cage-bars, and our very *bodies* in this world are cages! I find I remember the narration with a peculiar sunny distinctness; the sign everywhere of a good delineation. Cardalion himself is a broad joyous Son of Anak; and Archbishop Joss, and brown-beautiful Budoor, and the Physic-craft of the Father of Budoor,—they are all welcome to me, and dance as at home thro' my head. Some of the double rhymes provoke explosions of laughter,—partly *with* them and partly alas *at* them. Slim rod, Nimrod; Bishop, fish up, &c.! You are a strange fellow.

My critical censures and proposed emendations are not many. First, were it not expedient to shorten somewhat the didactic tendencies of Aljawam, the ancient Doctor-Sheik, and explain better what he was wanting there in the desert,—other than lecturing on Strauss's *Leben Jesu* and such high matters! Next,

I will remark that the "twenty days" of Budoor's captivity had passed over me like one minute : what Richard, what the world had been doing all that while, except hunt down one unfortunate little gazelle, we do not in the least discover. A stanza or two were well worth intercalating there. Thirdly, I do vote that you get some other hest for Richard's riding to the hills than that mad one of hunting down the "onager," which really was as hopeless as a Scottish "hunting of the *gowk*," and is disgraceful to Cardalio ! For the rest, why were not all the English out in search of him when missing on that occasion ? Fourthly—But no, I will not add any fourthly : the thing, I tell you, made me *guffaw* in honest laughter ; that is the sum of all criticisms that will interest you.

And so good-bye for this day ; and good and ever better speed to you, my bonny man !

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 99

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Falmouth.

TEMPLAND, THORNHILL, DUMFRIESSHIRE,
14th March, 1842.

DEAR STERLING,

You have heard, I believe, what tragedy has occurred here ; a sudden stroke grievous to Friends of yours : I would have written specially to you an eight days ago, but that I knew your good Mother was to apprise you of what was essential ;¹ and then ever since my quitting London, I have been, and still am, driven about in a continual whirl, destructive to all composed expression of thoughts—which do not in any case well fit themselves to utterance in words. Death is great ; there is nothing else in Life that,

¹ Carlyle had written a letter to Mrs. Sterling (John's mother) on the 9th of March, giving her particulars of what had occurred at Templand, and the whereabouts of himself and wife.

in these days and in all days, still asserts itself as a miracle to the senses and hearts of all men.

My poor Wife has had a severe wound. The event was as good as entirely unexpected : her Mother was one of the kindest of women, whose faults were all of the surface, whose virtues came from instinct and lay deep : the poor Daughter has now no parents, hardly any kindred that was dear to her ;—a lonely outlook. Time alone can in some measure assuage such a feeling. Human sympathies too are always a medicine.

She is to get back to Chelsea, so soon as her Liverpool Uncle (the last Uncle she now has, a good kind son of Nature) gets home from this place ; which he expects to do about Wednesday : Jane will probably be home about the end of the week. One of her female cousins, whom she likes well, is to attend her. You know, I suppose, that she had got as far as Liverpool on the first summons of danger ; and that at Liverpool the fatal tidings stopt her. There she still continues. I have got a Note or two, very quiet, but very mournful, very desolate. Pray write a word to her with your first opportunity, tho' I should wait the longer.

There remain here many matters, of a most alien nature, for me to settle. I shall have to take time, and deliberate. My first longing is for absolute solitude ; that I might be left to myself and my own thoughts in the middle of these wild hills and winds. All other discourse at first is poor. The great Earth with her sounding streams and change of seasons ; she is still there, and another Life has been absorbed into her mysterious bosom,—stern as very Death, yet beautiful also and true as Heaven and Life. Silence, silence !

One of the last things I read was your Article ¹ for

¹ *Characteristics of German Genius*. See Archdeacon Hare's *Essays and Tales* by John Sterling, i. pp. 382-421.

the *Foreign Quarterly* ; which I liked very much, bating perhaps a little rashness of phraseology here and there. You will write many other articles, I hope ; and sound a message into the ears of some. Adieu, dear Sterling ; good be ever with you.

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 100

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Clifton.

CHELSEA,

23rd July, 1842.

MY DEAR STERLING,

The day before yesterday your Packet of Puritan Divinity arrived safe. Your Parcel for Knightsbridge was forthwith consigned to your Father, who happened to come in at the moment ; Maurice's Parcel was also despatched at once, as you directed.

I have read Peters's Sermon ; the longest, most authentic utterance of his I have yet met with. Poor Hugh is not at all a fool ; I find in him a very considerable fund of natural sagacity, coupled with great activity and ardour, and I do believe far more than the average sincerity, kindheartedness and general worth ; I also like his drollery, or at least do not dislike it, even in the Puritan Pulpit,—so fond am I of real fun in the heart of any mortal, almost at any time ! The old Christians used to be seized with " Easter Laughter " (some terrible whirlwind of *guffawing*, I suppose, even at that sacred time) : serious men are always great laughers, too, on occasion. Was not poor Peters unlucky to lose his head ! Lawrence Sterne kept his. Time and chance happen unto all.—By the bye, Hugh was a Cornish man, as I discover very lately. No Biography of him, or means of getting one, is now extant on the earth.

Yesterday there arrived a Packet from Varnhagen von Ense ; part of the contents were three copies of these German Shovelhatteries, one of which copies I send to you,—for your virtues or sins. Pray read it, and if you like, send it on to Hare or some other. To me the whole matter is but mournful, distressing, even offensive,—as the gradual inevitable rotting away of carrion ; with antiseptics indeed, but with ammonia and hydrogen not the less !

You made a real escape in the case of Bronson Alcott. He is a Yankee Don Quixote, who guesses that *he* will bring back the Saturnian Kingdoms to this forlorn Earth by a life of simplicity, and diet of vegetables. For the first two times, I got good fun out of him ; for he is an ingenious, honest-hearted kind of Quixote,—a long lean man, very like the Don, even in figure, who drawls terribly, and “guesses,” and has a kind of rustic dignity and tolerability about him : but the second time, discerning my hopeless unbelief in vegetables, he expressed real affliction ; and tho’ we kept him all night, and fed him with Scotch porridge, and unimaginable messes according to our best understanding, he refused to be comforted, and has not come again.—This also is the rotting of carrion ; tho’ it may be *hartshorn* derived from that ; a kind of ammonia without the hydrogen, or with less of it ! To speak in a figure !

My dear Sterling, I wish to Heaven you could teach me the secret of *doing a little work* ; my poor right hand has altogether forgotten its cunning : and yet if I can work no more, why should I live any more ! Verily it were not worth while.

My Wife salutes you ; joins with me in wishing you all good.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER IOI

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Falmouth.

CHELSEA,

29th August, 1842.

MY DEAR STERLING,

This Letter from Emerson, along with one for myself, has just arrived. Those others, from various hands, for Alcott "the Potato Quixote," have reached me by the same ship, and been already sent voyaging towards Richmond or some Elsewhere. The Potato Quixote and I have come to a sheer rupture, after our third interview ; on my asking him, "When shall I see you again?" his answer was, "Never, I guess !" A worthy man ; but one of the absurdest I have ever seen. They tell me Emerson furnishes his expenses to this country ; a very notable fact ; significant of several things in the *new* country ! No unlikelier missionary, since that Quaker that walked off direct to the Pope and told *him* the Lord's message, has come athwart my field of vision—good and better luck to him !

Your friend Owen the Naturalist came down to me one evening ; staid two hours : I returned his call, yesterday, with my Brother, and went over his Museum. He is a man of real talent and worth, an extremely rare kind of man. Hardly twice in London have I met with any articulate-speaking biped who told me a thirtieth-part so many things I knew not and wanted to know. It was almost like to make me cry, to hear articulate human speech once more conveying real information to me,—not dancing on airy tiptoes, nowhence and nowhither, as the manner of the Cockney dialect is ! God's forgiveness to all Cockney "men of wit" : they know not what death and Gehenna does lurk in that laborious inanity of theirs : inane speech, the pretence to be

saying something when you really are saying *nothing* but only counterfeits of things, is the beginning and basis of all other inanities whatsoever ! Where-with the Earth and England is now sick ; almost unto death.—Thank Heaven and your stars, I have no more paper at present !

Tomorrow, or next day, I am off for Mrs. Buller's in Suffolk to bring home my Wife ; who has been there about a fortnight ; with some improvement, I think. Cannot I run over to Ely, to St. Ives, Huntingdon and Hinchinbrooke ! Ah, me !

My hurry, however, is so great at present, I took this mere scrap of paper for you ; and must now end it. Adieu, dear Sterling ; *Vale et me ama.*

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 102

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Falmouth.

CHELSEA,

2nd November, 1842.

DEAR STERLING,

The thing you speak of has several times passed thro' my own head :¹ about last year this time, I can remember, it was there in so lively a state that I wrote of it to somebody or other,—apparently not to you. The enormous confusions that obstruct any fair foundation of such an enterprise, and then the enormous labour of carrying it on, with the small and uncertain outlook of the same, had driven it into the distance again. I do not at present receive the suggestion with a satanic grin from the tree of Knowledge ; far from it ! I myself would cheerfully undertake the editor function, and go right heartily into it, were the thing feasible. Nay,

¹ Sterling had proposed to Carlyle the propriety of founding an entirely new magazine or review.

I suppose, were these detestable dust-mountains of *Civil-War* Folios once out of my way,—fatal dust-mountains in which three years of my life already lie buried, without as yet the smallest visible fraction of a result,—it is very likely I might resume the enterprise as one really to be attempted.

Two things, as you say, seem very plain : first, that there is at present no preaching in England, and a visibly growing appetite (the sternest *necessity* there has long been) to have some : and second, that the Printing Press is the only, or by far the chief, Pulpit in these days. Whether in that case we are not verily to set about executing, by way of *new* Paul's Cross¹ for the nineteenth century, some Miscellany, Magazine, Review or Periodical Publication of our own, and speaking out with amazing plainness therefrom ? Alas, it is beset with impediments ; a most questionable adventure, tho' actually not without promise too !

Difficulties are many ; but the preliminary, desperate difficulty is always with me the question, What *writers* are there ? Supposing all else smooth, who is to write ? Really except yourself I cannot at the moment recollect one English soul whom I should reckon much of a trump card in that game ! Your Harewood is one of a considerable class, of great worth, nay of inestimable worth in comparison, for they are *sincere*, as not one of the old hacks is or was : but the writing talent of the class is by no means transcendent.

On the whole, suppose you try to elaborate the scheme of such a thing practically in your head ; to make an actual list of Writers ;—especially a list of “ people with funds,” that might be applied to ! I will give it more consideration when you show it me in that shape. Gradually the thing may ripen.—

¹ For a description of the *old* Paul's Cross, see Carlyle's *Historical Sketches*, p. 92.

As for me at present, I am sunk under a thousand fathoms of shot rubbish ; and feel for most part as if I should have the life choked clean out of me there, and never in this world be heard of more. *Eheu !*

An American Woman¹ has compiled, in two pretty little volumes, a *Life of Jean Paul* ; with very little talent, except a loving heart and a deft pair of scissors ; yet with a remarkable success for her readers. It is a tropical grove, of thousand flowers and fragrances ; and the image of Jean Paul, in white hat and wide green coat, is ever and anon visible thro' it. I have not read a pleasanter book for many months. How easily might good books be made, if people were not themselves bad !

Poor Allan Cunningham : the news of his sudden summons falls stern and heavy on me. A rough true mass of manhood, with far more faculty than he himself knew of. One human face that always smiled on me will smile on me no more.

Adieu, dear Sterling. Love me while you live !

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 103

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Falmouth.

CHELSEA,

11th November, 1842.

DEAR STERLING,

It must be admitted your List² too is none of the richest ! Little appears above ground for this enterprise ; but Faith, as usual, has the presentiment and preassurance of much lying *under*. To the block-head all is barren, from Dan to Beersheba ; it is Genius that carries a divining-rod, and knows where

¹ Mrs. Thomas Lee (*née* Eliza Buckmaster).

² Of writers for the proposed new periodical.

the metals sleep!—In reality, we must have this matter farther investigated, the feasibilities of it ascertained a little; and a general council of war held on it.

For the present I have another little bit of investigation for you: read it on that snip of print, which I have clipt from the Newspaper there indicated. It is above six weeks since the paragraph first turned up, in an abridged shape, and struck us considerably in the *Examiner*; where “Caradon” was I did not know; and never till now, by great inquiries, could ascertain. It seemed to me I had not lately fallen in with a manfuller piece of heroism, of swift conclusive insight into what was fit to be done, and resolution to do it, than in this case of the poor self-immolating miner. “Behold, we all die, if I hang here: it is my turn to die, and his to live,—my turn, and I stand it!” This is manlike; no spoony or inferior creature could have done it. Unseen too; not on Drury-lane stage at all; no clapping of hands or immortal meed of glory to be looked for. I call it very great and noble:—superior almost to Miss Martineau’s pension; tho’ the Mechanics’ Institutes have not yet met to celebrate it!

Well, what I want you to do, is to ask the Foxes or any benevolent fit person, to ascertain first of all whether the thing is, *in every point, exactly and undeniably true*. As Liskeard and Caradon are in your quarter, this may prove accomplishable, by and by, without much difficulty.

What is there to be done, provided the thing *be* true,—if anything were to be done,—our benevolent fit Friend may himself help to advise. I am greatly against all lion “prizes for virtue”;—poor Grace Darling, I partly surmise, has had her poor quiet life all broken up, her nerves shattered, her death itself not a little brought on, by that! At the same time, one feels as if such a man as this miner were

fit for something better than breaking stones at the bottom of a damp pit. I know not what can be done with him. If any subscription or the like were thought good, I would gladly give my poor guinea among others. At all events, and if nothing whatever be done, I shall always know where a right brave man is living and labouring in this world along with me ; and that of itself is worth something.¹

Good night, dear Sterling. The wet wind is roaring thro' all crevices of Nature in these parts : I am tired with the whole day's confinement, and proceed now to knit up the ravelled sleeve of innumerable paltry cares with an honest pipe of tobacco, my *finale* for the night. Nightly, in that last pipe, I think of all friends, and go often enough to Falmouth,—and much *farther*, alas !

With many blessings,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 104

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Falmouth.

CHELSEA,

21st November, 1842.

DEAR STERLING,

In a Letter which arrived three days ago from Emerson, there were, close under the seal, these words : “ Sterling's Papers,—if he is near you,—are all in Mr. Russell's hands. I played my part of Fadladean with great rigour ; and put my results to Russell, but have not now written to J. S.”—These words, whatever they may mean, I have since undertaken to convey to you ;—and here you have them. The interpretation, I suppose, is that a Yankee

¹ The story of the two miners deep down in the shaft, with the blasting fuse accidentally lighted prematurely, and the windlass incapable of bringing up *both* together, is fully and graphically told by Carlyle in the *Life of John Sterling*, Pt. iii. c. 3.

Bookseller is about doing his duty to you ; which I wish he would do, and let us see the result.

Today your Letter came ; and, *sticking to it by the wafer*, another Letter from you to your Mother : both had been shoved thro' our door-slit as one ; and indeed I had torn up the cover of your Mother's, before they fell asunder,—to my extreme amazement ! It is a document as to the use of improved wafers. My Wife carried up your Mother's share of the affair ;—found her not worse, except from some rebellious tooth which is plaguing her a little. *She* is instructed to send up Arnold's Lectures¹ tomorrow,—I mean my Wife is. I, as you, liked these Lectures considerably ; an admirable calmness, cunning candour, adroitness to insinuate the *thin edge into* unwedgeable and gnarled Oxford with its prejudices and platitudes. It was Arnold's forte. He seemed to me likely to be the far best Schoolmaster I had ever in my life seen. A brave man. But his Lectures are rather a game of battle than a battle : *Prolusions* to a Waterloo !

You ask me to retract at least Shakespeare's conditional silence. It seems a small request ! And yet when I think of Oliver Cromwell, the best King we ever had, escaping by the merest accident from dying as a grazier at Ely ; and Martin Luther, by the like, from disappearing as a silent Dominican ; and when I look at myself, and at other great *unwriting* souls that I have known, and small unweariedly writing souls that I yet know,—it becomes hard for me to retract ! No, my friend, wherever I go or stand, I find the *inarticulate dust of Poets* (of Makers, Inventors, great struggling souls, who never

¹ *Introductory Lectures on Modern History*, delivered at Oxford in Lent Term, 1842. By Thomas Arnold, Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford, and Head Master of Rugby School. When published as a book, a copy was given by Arnold to Carlyle, who had visited him and his wife at Rugby on returning from Scotland in May of this year.

higgled for Copyright in the Row,—and merely tended towards Heaven and God, and *from* Hell and the Devil); and I say to myself, “There have been millions of millions of Poets, and hundreds of them have been Shakespeares, perhaps thousands, or a higher ratio, since Adam first put on fig-breeches!”—That, in real sobriety, is my faith.—And truly, the longer I live, I find there is no “fame,” &c., &c., in this poor scrub of a world that could make a real piece of Manhood go far out of his road to gather it; I think, still, if he is a Reality, he runs and strives towards *God*, and *from* the Devil (if we will understand the words well), and not from or towards any kind of wages whatsoever that would be even promised him, much less made good to him, in these climates.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 105

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Falmouth.

CHELSEA,

14th December, 1842.

DEAR STERLING,

I cannot convince you of Shakespeare, at present: how can I? But it remains part of a very central conviction with myself, which seems to spread largely in late years, and explains many things for me. In good truth, the enormous opulence of Life in this old universe surpasses comprehension. Game cocks fight: but the million-millionth part of them are never hatched at all; they are eaten, by the legion, at breakfast as mere eggs! A little Egyptian horse-litter, or Piccadilly steam heat, had made cocks of them:—Think, think!

By what chance it happens I know not; but the Letter on miner Vervan,¹ dated almost four weeks

¹ The miner hero, named “Will” in the *Life of John Sterling*.

back, arrives along with the other this morning. Perhaps you *have* been inquiring of him that keeps the Gig? In that case too, the response, as I infer, was satisfactory.

This man Vervan is evidently a hopeful person ; one of those rare human beings whom it is not very difficult to help. Decidedly he ought to be tried, to a certain extent. In what way, with what precautions, pre-inquiries, &c., I will leave you and our benevolent Friends altogether to decide. A sum of £40 or £50, to aid him in his noble purpose of schooling himself, might at any rate be useful. I put down my sovereign on the adjoined leaf (the Post-office cover goes along with it) ; do you and other kind men add what more you can, in the shape of money or of better than money : my poor faculty in regard to the matter is as good as out. But just men, beholding such a thing, are *bound* to acknowledge it,—to cherish it and the like of it as Heaven's sacred fire on the altar of this our common Earth, not too copiously supplied with fire at present ! I have rarely fallen in with a more assistable-looking man than this same most meritorious Vervan. Tell the Misses Fox that I specially recommend him to them. Tell all people that a man of this kind *ought* to be hatched ; that it were shameful to eat him as a breakfast egg ! And so Heaven prosper him ; and you, and all the benefactors he can find : and may some blessing come out of this inquiry, and not a curse to any one.

My Wife will go to Alicia tomorrow, and make more specially the investigation you require. I believe your Father's opinion is not the only one that fluctuates from clear hope to considerable shades of apprehension. Today, as Madame Pepoli informs us, your good Mother was walking in the Garden, and in a quite remarkable degree improved. My Wife, who goes up almost whenever she can go anywhere, generally reports to me a kind of mixed bulletin ;

never very bad, but also never altogether good. You will hear from herself very shortly.

If we had a Periodical on foot at this moment, it seems to me I should write a variety of Articles ! Yet at bottom, perhaps it were only *waste*. The thing that will not run together as a Book, we fling it out in detached splashes as Articles. We should have *made* it run together ; fused it, roasted, tortured it, till the divisive dross had been all tortured out of it ; and then—*Bon jour, M. Diderot !*

Yours ever,
T. C.

Mrs. Lee's *Life of Jean Paul*, I think, must be procurable at Green's in Newgate Street. Mill has my copy, and then Darwin is to have it ; after which it were much at your service.—I have seen your Mr. Forster,¹ and liked him well. The *Younger Edda* ? Yes.

LETTER 106

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Falmouth.

CHELSEA,
9th March, 1843.

DEAR STERLING,

Here is your Vervan's Epistle to the Cornubians again : I fear the poor man will go mad ; but he has at least a better chance, keeping cows, in sight of green fields, skies and other actualities, than imprisoned in the bowels of the Earth, and his own Magic-lantern Phantasms merely. If the subscription can contribute to save him, it will do well ; which may the gods grant.

I finished my poor Book² yesterday, in a very sick condition (it and I) ; and today have corrected the

¹ W. E. Forster (later The Right Honourable, etc.).

² *Past and Present*.

first sheet of it : we find there are to be some 19 in all ; and it will be towards May, I conjecture, before the sluggish people let me quite free of it.

Tonight I go to the House of Lords to hear old Wellington speak : I want to hear the voice of that old blade, what kind of sound it has ; once, while we are still both in this world.

My poor little sweetheart,¹ whom I remember, as if still seeing her : it is bad news this you send me of her ! I long for the Southwest winds for all your sakes. The weather here is infinitely too vehement to admit of *you* yet for a while, were all the rest propitious.

I have quantities of Letters to despatch today ; and have already pored my eyes out, rectifying " Copy."

Adieu, dear Sterling. Get strong again and come to see us.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

I am attending a Lyell's Course of Lectures on Geology, too ;—in our old shop up in Edwards Street, Portman Square.² The audience a square-jawed, harsh male company of near 200 ; the Lecturer clear—but of kin to Neptune, I fear !

LETTER 107

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Falmouth.

CHELSEA,
5th May, 1843.

MY DEAR STERLING,

It is but some four weeks since I one day bade your Father say that, having now a little leisure,

¹ One of Sterling's daughters—little Charlotte, I think—she who had once asked Carlyle to " shoe my doll ! " See *ante*, p. 204.

² The room in which Carlyle had lectured.

I meant to write to you straightway ;—and alas, since then, there has fallen out so much about which there was no writing.¹ We have had to think of you in silence. “Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.” It is the old story ; as old as the first existence of mankind in this Earth ; and yet, to every one of us, it arrives with a strange originality, sharp and astonishing as if it had never happened before. Ah me !—You must take care of your health, more than ever : all kinds of grief weigh on one with double pressure when the body is weak. Grieve not, all grief is useless ;—we are but a little way behind. As the old Psalmist said, “We shall go to them, they will not return to us” ; there is in this an everlasting source of composure : death would be intolerable otherwise.

Probably you will be better within reach of London ; and if so, Southampton surely is an eligible region. You are but four hours from us there, and yet almost a hundred miles. I have often thought of a cottage for myself on the beach of some cove in the Isle of Wight : but I believe I shall never get it, or anything resembling it ; my notion begins to be that I am doomed to this spot, unlovely as it is to me : alas, few places are very lovely in late times ; the Earth all growing into a kind of Golgotha to me,—a Golgotha which is a flaming Sinai too, however : let us complain of nothing ! We must not complain, we must march on like men :

. . . Stille
Ruhn oben die Sterne
Und unten die Gräber.²

All Gospels and Religions, as it were, lie included for me in these words. Courage !

¹ Sterling had lost both his mother and his wife in April just past.

² Stars silent rest o'er us,

Graves under us silent !

(From Goethe's *Mason's Song*.)

My health is not so much bad, as painful, depressing ; to which, I suppose, the solitary life I have been long leading, and still insist on leading, must somewhat contribute. The speech of men does nothing for me in general ; it grieves and distresses me, on the contrary, for most part. I am positively almost frightened, now and then, at quack speech ! The remedy of course is : Avoid it. Yes ; and yet there is much to be said on the other side withal. I think of doing two things : first, slinking off into the country, so soon as the sun comes fairly out ; and then, secondly, endeavouring to get forward with some fresh work or other. There is always work enough for a man,—thank God ! And plenty of comfort for a man accordingly. I do not feel unable for new work, were I once rested a while.

For the present I get along, mainly by help of *Danish*, in which I have got a master (or rather got one lesson, for that was all that proved necessary) ; of Müller's *Sagabibliothek* in that language, and all manner of perplexed shadows out of Scandinavia. It is as good as "worsted work" for a weak man ! I really delight greatly in the essence of that old *Norse* world, when I can get a glimpse of its essence. Agamemnon and Achilles seem to me lucky in their Homer ; I have fallen in with as good fellows, if not better, that remain entirely *unsung* ! Besides, compared with Exeter Hall, are not *Gimle* and *Valhalla* really respectable places ?

We saw your Brother often, and liked him better than ever. I do not think he knows completely what regard is entertained for him here. Adieu, my Friend : be careful of your health ; the rest you will do without advising.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 108

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Ventnor.

CHELSEA,

4th December, 1843.

MY DEAR STERLING,

I received your kind Note, written in the hour of your departure ; I received your Irish Newspaper from Ventnor, and understood it as a monition that I had permission to write to you,—which I wished to do, but alas, could not ! In truth I am very miserable at present ; or call it heavy-laden with fruitless toil ; which will have much the same meaning. My abode is, and has been, figuratively speaking, in the centre of chaos : onwards there is no moving, in any yet discovered line, and where I am is no abiding :—miserable enough ! The fact is, without any figure, I am doomed to write some Book about that unblessed Commonwealth ; and as yet there will no Book show itself possible.¹ The whole stagnancy of the English genius, two hundred years thick, lies heavy on me ; dead Heroes, buried under two centuries of Atheism, seem to whimper pitifully, “ Deliver us, canst thou not deliver us ! ”—and alas, what am I, or what is my father's house ? Confound it, I have lost four years of good labour in the business ; and still the more I expend on it, it is like throwing good labour after

¹ Sterling did not live to see his friend's book on Cromwell ; but from his intimate knowledge of Carlyle he was enabled to foresee how effective it would be in rescuing “ our chief of men ” (as Milton called Cromwell) from “ detractions rude ” and calumnies without end piled high and wide during two centuries and more. For Sterling writes to Mrs. Carlyle (in 1842) : “ If he writes a Book about the Civil War in the spirit of his Letter to me and his printed Lectures, he will set people on cultivating warts and pimples on the face, and Milnes on calling himself a Crypto-Cromwell, and will go nigh to making the Bible fashionable. I have been readjusting my soul by reading those same Lectures on Heroes ;—and I see many things more clearly than before. It is really a sublime Book,—the best in all English prose so far as I know.”

bad ! On the whole, you ought to pity me. Is thy servant a dead dog, that these things have fallen on him ?—My only consolation is that I am struggling to be the most conservative man in England, or one of the most conservative. If the Past Time, only two centuries back, lie wholly as a torpedo Darkness and Dulness, freezing as with Medusa-glance all souls of men that look on it, where are our foundations gone ? If the Past Time cannot become *melodious*, it must be forgotten, as good as annihilated ; and we rove like aimless exiles that *have* no ancestors,—whose world began only yesterday ! That must be my consolation, such as it is.

I see almost nobody, I avoid sight rather, and study at least to consume my own smoke. I wish among your buildings, you would build me some small Prophet's Chamber, fifteen feet square, with a separate garret and flue for smoking ; within a furlong of your big house ; sacred from all noises, of dogs, cocks, pianofortes and insipid men ;—engaging some dumb old woman to light a fire for me daily and boil some kind of kettle : a man might write there all day to some purpose, and cheer himself by talk all evening ! But it cannot be. There is no such city of refuge, I am told, till once we get beyond the Zodiac ; so, in the meantime, we must study to go on without it.

Of men or new books or things, I cannot say a word ; dwelling myself so deep, with mere Chaos and old Nox. I have only seen Mill transiently once, Lockhart transiently once, and hardly any other person whose existence is of any moment to you. A man from Chancery Lane, anonymous hitherto, sent me a Pamphlet about the necessity of an *Authors' Publishing Society*, in which project, I hear, he still persists, tho' not entirely a fool ; I also purchased for sixpence lately the first No. of an *Authors' Institution Circular*, or some such thing,

worth less than any known coin :—indeed there is everywhere a bodeful premonition heard that Book-selling, in our sense of the business, draws to a close ; that *it* is due some time since to Chaos again,—and that something else must follow it.

Did you see an American of the name of James, who went towards you ? An estimable man, full of sense and honest manfulness, when you get acquainted with him. My regards to him, if he is near you.

My Wife is gone this evening with your Father to drink tea with Darwin ; a notable lark ! The articles in the *Times* do the writer of them an immense good, besides what they infallibly do or tend towards doing to the world. Adieu, dear Sterling, best friend ! Be not angry with me, be patient with me ; write when you have charity, and so, *Vale, vale*.

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 109

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Ventnor.

CHELSEA,

9th June, 1844.

MY DEAR STERLING,

I hear almost daily of you, and think of you oftener than daily this long while, tho' I write nothing. Sometimes I have said to myself : “ You should write. He knows your feeling, and it is something to him ;—and in dark hours, now and then, such silence may seem doubtful to him.” Perhaps I should. But indeed all words of mine seemed little other than an impertinence in that solemn situation. Many of my thoughts continue silent, incapable of being written, on this as on other subjects ! The longer I live, I think it grows the more so. My much-loved Friend ——— I really can “ write nothing ! It all lies in *these three words* ;—and these,

if they are of any use to you, you are authorized to write in ineffaceable characters in your very heart.

Except for some days during the darkest part of the crisis, I have never, in spite of all your own sad utterances, seriously feared that I was to lose you. Perhaps I am wrapping myself in mere cowardly delusions ; preparing for myself, at a future day, a frightful awakening : but such is the fact. I have, in spite of all Doctors, a great confidence in your vitality of structure ; the fibres of the man, tho' diseased, are those of a lion ! My Brother too speaks always hopefully ; says, he has seen men lying to all appearance at the verge of death in that disorder, pale, with their eyes and being all aglow in speechless still excitement ; who nevertheless rose up again, and were well. He says, if you can live to five-and-forty, this disordered condition of the lungs will abate of itself. My constant hope is, That your last terrible crisis may be a *warning* to you, more impressive than any of the others were. They have all come, I think, out of some rash liberty, permitted to other men, but to you forbidden. You have in all things been too hot and hasty, my Friend,—in all things, that generous infirmity cleaves to you. Lay it aside ; learn by these stern teachings, to recognise the adamantine limits that so bound you, as such do bound us all. Within these, if it please God, there is yet a most fruitful and noble existence in store for you.—“Let us be still,” as the Old Hebrews and Old Puritans used to say ; “let us be still, and call on God.” There is yet no other wisdom, and will be none other, for the son of Adam on this Earth.

I have been looking forward to the West wind, which we now have, as the best of all medicines for you. It seems you again were a little hasty ; went out too rashly, and have got a little check. *Canny, canny!* as the Scotch say ; use as not abusing !—On the whole, you must get well again : you must

fast get a little better again,—that I may come and see you. I will come certainly whenever I can hear conclusively that it will not be a mere burden to you, hurtful and not profitable.

All Spring and Summer, hitherto, I have, for my own share, been abundantly miserable; plunging thro' Chaos, as I call it,—the Rushworth Dryasdust chaos; unable to find north or south in it, bottom or shore in it! Really, as I said somewhere, it is "like walking hand in hand with mere *Madness*"; trying whether you shall make it sane, or it shall make you mad! No labour for the present is joyous but grievous.—I have seen your Father, your Son and your Brother today; all well. *Wir heissen euch HOFFEN!*

Auf ewig,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 110¹

This is Carlyle's farewell letter to Sterling, written only three weeks before his dearly loved friend's death, which occurred on the 18th of September, 1844. It is in reply to two short notes from Sterling, especially to the earlier one of them, which is dated the 10th of August. For the reader's convenience a few lines from the note of the 10th may be cited here: "I tread the common road into the great darkness without any thought of fear, and with much of hope. Certainty indeed I have none. With regard to You and Me I cannot begin to write; . . . Towards me, it is still more true than towards England, that no man has been and done like you. Heaven bless you! If I can lend a hand when *THERE*, that will not be wanting." How deeply these touching words of remembrance and farewell affected Carlyle's heart and soul is sufficiently

¹ This letter appeared in the *New Letters of Thomas Carlyle* (John Lane, 1904).

manifest in the tone of his reply, which follows here. A few days after receiving it, Sterling, writing to Archdeacon Hare, says : " There was a Note from Carlyle not long since, I think the noblest and tenderest thing that ever came from human pen."

T. Carlyle to John Sterling, Ventnor.

CHELSEA,

27th August, 1844.

MY FRIEND,

Today another little Note from you makes the hearts start within us. On Sunday morning gone a fortnight there came another ; which will dwell in my memory, I think, while I have any memory left. Ever since, it mingles with every thought, or is itself my thought ; neither do I wish to exclude it, if I could. To me there is a tone in it as of Sphæremusic, of the Eternal Melodies which we know well to be sacred,—sadder than any tears, and yet withal more beautiful than any joy. My Friend, my brave Sterling ! A right valiant man ; very beautiful, very dear to me ; whose like I shall not see again in this world !

We are journeying towards the Grand Silence ; what lies beyond it earthly man has never known, nor will know : but all brave men have known that it was Godlike, that it was right Good,—that the name of it was GOD. *Wir heissen euch hoffen.* What is right and best for us will full surely be. 'Tho' He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. " ETERNO AMORE " ; that is the ultimate significance of this wild clashing whirlwind which is named Life, where the Sons of Adam flicker painfully for an hour.

My Wife is all in tears : no tear of mine, dear Sterling, shall, if I can help it, deface a scene so sacred. The memory of the Brother that is gone, like a brave one, shall be divine to us ; and, if it

please the Supreme Wisdom, we shall—O my friend, my friend !

In some moods it strikes me, with a reproachful emphasis, that there would be a kind of satisfaction for me could I see you with these eyes yet again. But you are in great suffering ; perhaps I should be but a disturbance ? There is a natural longing that way ; but perhaps it is a false pusillanimous one : I have, at bottom, no speech for you which could be so eloquent as my silence is. And yet I could be silent there too ; silent and quiet. I shall let Anthony decide it between us, to whom I write today.

Adieu, my brave and dear one.

Yours evermore,

T. CARLYLE.

TO THOMAS CARLYLE

(By John Sterling—four days before his death)

O ! Carlyle, could I find a word
Before I leave this earthly shore
Of greater orb than e'er was heard
By kinsman or by friend before,

To thee that word I'd surely breathe ;
For thou wouldst guard it in a cell
Deep-built as central caves beneath,
And Silence is the sentinel.

There long thy Thoughts are steeped in flame
And in the thrice-locked fount of tears,
Till, sounded forth, at once they shame
And move a host with tingling ears.

For not as in a bounded bay
Thy billows roll unripe and weak,
But from a thousand leagues away
The long vast waters booming speak.

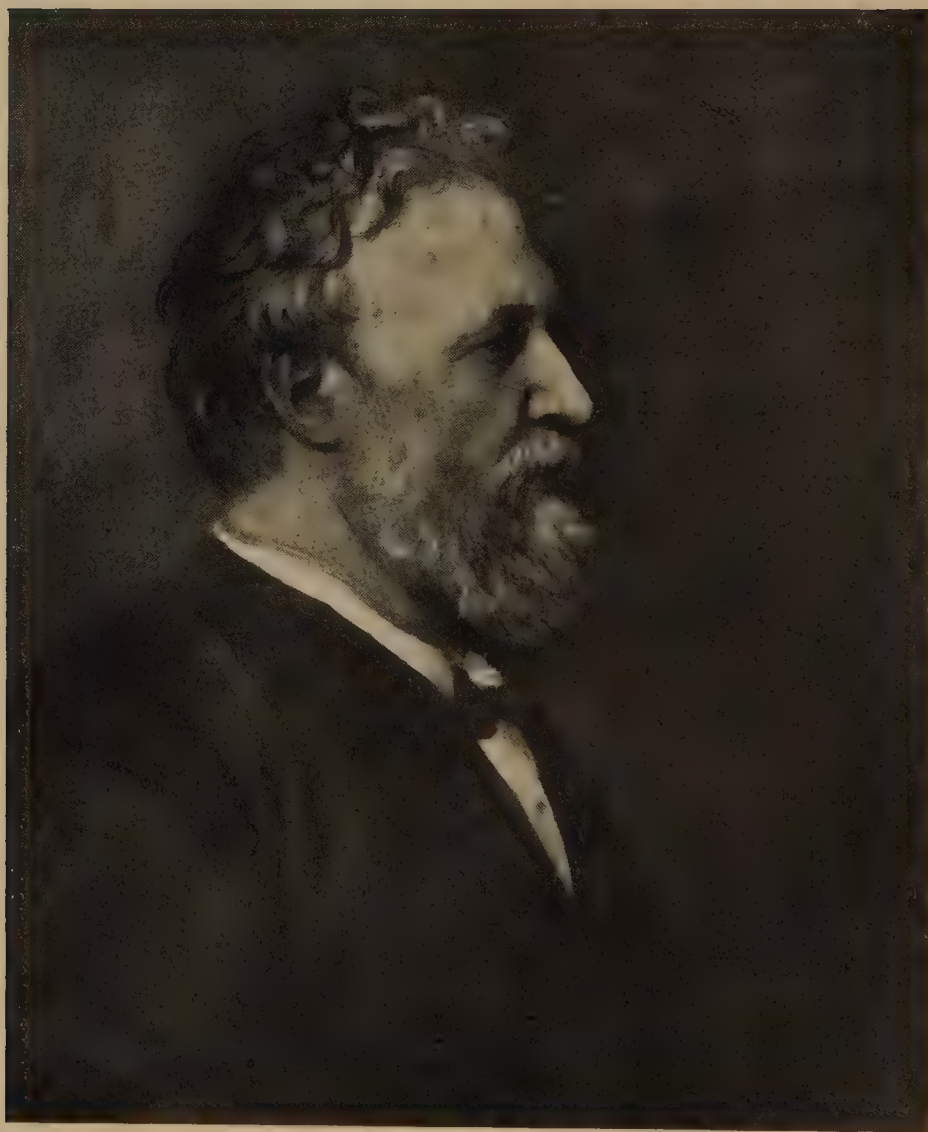
Such roar on crags and sands of earth
I ne'er have heard, nor felt the soul
So startled into throes of birth
By piercing clang or awful toll.

But greater e'en than this the right
Of him who knows thee friend to friend,
To whom laugh, groan and maddest flight
More than the Sage the Man commend.

That I shall leave behind me here
A greater soul below the sky
I know not, knowing none more dear
For me sometimes will pause and sigh.

September 14th, 1844.

To ROBERT BROWNING



ROBERT BROWNING, ÆT. 62

Carlyle's Letters to Robert Browning

LETTER III¹

T. Carlyle to Robert Browning, Firenze, Toscana.

CHELSEA, LONDON,
23rd June, 1847.

DEAR BROWNING,

Many thanks for your Italian Letter, which dropped in, by the Penny Post, with right good welcome, like a friendly neighbour, some week or two ago. I am right glad to hear of your welfare ; yours and your fair Partner's. No marriage has taken place within my circle, these many years, in which I could so heartily rejoice. You I had known, and judged of ; her, too, conclusively enough, if less directly ; and certainly if ever there was a union indicated by the finger of Heaven itself, and so sanctioned and prescribed by the Eternal laws under which poor transitory Sons of Adam live, it seemed to me, from all I could hear or know of it, to be this ! Courage, therefore ; follow piously the Heavenly Omens, and fear not. He that can follow these, he, in the loneliest desert, in the densest jostle and sordid whirlpool of London fog, will find his haven : "*Se tu segui tua stella !*"² Perpetually serene weather is not to be looked for by anybody ; least of all by the like of you two,—in whom precisely as more is given,

¹ This and the following letters to Browning were included in an article entitled the "Correspondence between Carlyle and Browning," which appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* for May, 1915.

² "If thou follow thy star." Dante, *Inferno*, xv. 55.

more also in the same proportion is required : but unless I altogether mistake, here is a life-partnership which, in all kinds of weather, has in it a capacity of being blessed to the Parties. May it indeed prove so. May the weather, on the whole, be moderate ;—and if joy be even absent for a season, may nobleness never ! That is the best I can wish. The *sun* cannot shine always ; but the places of the *stars*, these ought to be known always, and these can.

What you say of visiting Italy is infinitely tempting to one's love of travel, to what small remnants of it one still has. I was in young years the most ardent of travellers ; and executed immense journeyings, and worshippings at foreign shrines ; all in idea, since it could not be otherwise : neither yet has the passion quite left me ; tho' a set of nerves, in the highest degree unfit for locomotion under any terms, has taught me many times "the duty of staying at home." In fact there are moments, this very season, when I do scheme out a Winter in Italy as no unsuitable practical resource for me. There is, in many ways, a kind of pause in my existence this year. Ever since I got the Cromwell lumber shaken fairly off me, I am idle ; idle not for want of work, but rather in sight of a whole universe of work, which I have to despair of accomplishing, which in my sulky humour I could feel a disgust at attempting. My value for human ways of working in this time, for almost all human ways, including what they call "Literature" among the rest, has not risen of late ! We seem to me a people so enthralled and buried under bondage to the Hearsays and the Cants and the Grimaces, as no People ever were before. Literally so. From the top of our Metropolitan Cathedral to the sill of our lowest Cobbler's shop, it is to me, too often, like one general *somnambulism*, most strange, most miserable,—most damnable ! Surely, I say, men called "of genius,"—if genius

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be anything but a paltry toybox fit for Bartholomew Fair,—are commissioned, and commanded under pain of eternal death, to throw their whole “genius,” however great or small it be, into the remedy ; into the hopeful or the desperate battle against this ! And they spend their time in traditionary rope-dancings, and mere *Vauxhall* gymnastics ; and talk about “Art,” “High Art,” and I know not what ; and show proudly their week’s salary, of gold or of copper, of sweet voices and of long-eared brayings, and say comfortably, “*Anch’ io !*”¹ Surely such a function, gas-light it as we may, is essentially that of a *slave*. Surely I am against all that, from the very foundations of my being ;—and the length to which it goes, and the depth and height of it, and the fruit it bears (to Irish Sanspotatoes visibly, and to nobler men less visibly but still *more* fatally) has become frightfully apparent to me. A mighty harvest indeed ; and the labourers few or none. O for a thousand sharp sickles in as many strong right hands ! And I poor devil have but one rough sickle, and a hand that will soon be weary !—And, in fact, I stand here in a *solitude* (among so many millions of my fellow-creatures) which is sometimes almost sublime, which is always altogether frightful and painful,—if one could help it well. God mend us all ! In short, I believe it would do me real good to get into some new concrete scene for a while : and if I *could* travel, Italy might be the place rather than another. Or perhaps to get into dialogue with the Craggs and Brooks again,—that might be best ? That is the likeliest : for I am called to Scotland, where my good old Mother still is, by a kind of errand ; and elsewhither there is none precise enough. I will think farther. Italy is not quite *impossible* ; but I guess it to be too improbable. After all, the true remedy comes of itself, so soon as one is miser-

¹ See *ante*, p. 242.

able *enough* : work, some farther attempt at work,—even by the pen !

We have no news here worth spending ink upon. Miss Martineau has been to Jerusalem, and is back ; called here yesterday ; brown as a berry ; full of life, loquacity, dogmatism, and various “gospels of the east-wind.” Dickens writes a *Dombey and Son*, Thackeray a *Vanity Fair* ; not *reapers* they, either of them ! In fact the business of the rope-dancing goes to a great height ; and d’Israeli’s *Tancred* (readable to the end of the first volume), a kind of transcendent spiritual Houndsditch, marks an epoch in the history of this poor country.

When do you think of coming home ? Is not Chelsea an eligible side of London ? My Wife salutes you both, with many true regards. Adieu, dear Browning, and dear Mrs. Browning.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

Margaret Fuller is the name of the American lady : I think she has no writing of mine to your address : but she knows you, both of you, well ; and will really prove worthy (when once you get into her dialect) of being known to you.

LETTER 112

T. Carlyle to R. Browning, Devonshire Place, London.

DR. GULLY’S, GREAT MALVERN,¹

21st August, 1851.

DEAR BROWNING,

By a Letter which I had from Emerson the other day it appears that he, assisted by “ E. Chan-

¹ Carlyle and his wife were guests of Dr. Gully in his famous “water-cure” establishment at Great Malvern during the whole of August this year.

ning" and some other friend, is busily engaged in doing a *Life of Margaret Fuller*: his Letter enclosed a Note for Mazzini which I understood to contain a request for help in that matter. Of course the many interesting things you had to say of poor Margaret and her Roman husband came vividly into my mind; and I could not but feel that it would be a great pity if Emerson, who is a man of real dignity and worth, and who doubtless is striving to do his best in this affair, should by any oversight or ill chance be deprived of the lights he might get from you and Mrs. Browning in regard to the Italian part of the business. I forget what it precisely was that you said to me about having been applied to from America, or whether any refusal had already been given on your part: but my desire to help in a good enterprise one who has always been ready and eager to help me, originated the notion (which I am now converting into action) of applying to you myself, in Emerson's name, without loss of time, for whatever service you can conveniently give in the matter. I apply at once, because as the book is coming out in October, there is no time to lose; and because I wanted to report to Emerson that I *had* so applied, before going farther. If your answer be at all favourable, give me the privilege of gratifying Emerson by it as soon as may be: he will at once, of course, address a direct request to you, on the subject; and by the time his Letter reaches you, the Paper you have to send may be in a good state of forwardness,—that is, if you do not refuse to send any Paper whatsoever; which, considering your and Mrs. Browning's sentiments and opportunities both, I think will be a pity. "Reminiscences of Margaret Fuller": I should like well to read in that American Book a frank full Narrative of all that you and Mrs. B. can find to say upon that head; no matter how off-hand the writing, indeed it ought rather to be done

in that fashion ; and the faster you can write down what is already standing painted in your mind, clear and ready on the subject, it will be the fitter for the object. Pray try what you are free to do, you and Madame, either of you or both of you ; and answer me soon, if you can, that you will put something in black-on-white which Emerson may apply for so soon as I give him notice.

On the other hand, if (which I will not believe till I hear it) you cannot fitly do anything in this matter, then observe there is no ill yet done ; and there shall be none, for I need not even speak to Emerson about it if your answer prove unfavourable. And so enough till your answer come.

I am now nearly three weeks deep in "Water-cure" here ; which is a strange half-ridiculous and by no means unpleasant operation : not likely to prove miraculous in my case, I apprehend ; yet it does seem to produce some benefit, and indeed the immense walks and rides I take on these bright Hill-sides and yellow Plains, with total idleness and a near approach to total silence, could hardly fail to do good, independently of tubs and towels. On Saturday come a week we move Northward, for another glimpse of poor old Scotland and some possessions which are still left us there. I am in general profoundly saddened by the aspects of this world ; and find it good to hold my tongue that I may not get enraged as well. When do you go to Paris, and what is your address there ? Adieu, dear Browning.

Yours ever truly,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 113

T. Carlyle to R. Browning, Paris.

CHELSEA,

10th October, 1851.

DEAR BROWNING,

As you do not write, I think I will venture a small missive to the *Paris Armes*, which will probably find you somewhere in the neighbourhood, tho' doubtless you have now quitted that address.

I got home¹ duly on the appointed morrow after seeing you,—*midnight* gone a week ;—after one of the horriblemst days of travel, comparable to one of Jonah's days in the Whale's belly ; safe, but worn out into the uttermost pitch of weariness, disgust and almost despair. Since that time I have done little *else*, but sleep : whole cataracts of sleep, but very *unambrosial* sleep ; not for seven years have I slept as much within a similar space. Piccadilly and the Glass-Palace regions are still roaring with mad noise ;² but here, thank Heaven, is a forgotten corner, where the wearied soul can cover itself as under a Diogenes' tub, and contemplate with what of cynic piety is left the tumultuous delirium of the world ! Really it seems to me of late as if Bedlam, in sad truth, had universally broken loose ; and in this big glass soapbubble, and in other phenomena in every quarter, were dancing its *Saturnalia* to a very high tune indeed. Let us be patient ; let us try to hold our peace, and be patient !—I have seen nobody here, I rather avoid to see anybody, and will prefer to lie silent and annihilated for certain weeks.

Mazzini can at once afford you and Mrs. Browning, without any difficulty, the required introduction to Madame Dudevant ; only he says this sublime

¹ From his tour to Paris with the Brownings.

² This was the year of the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park.

Highpriestess of Anarchy is seldom now in Paris, only when there is some Play coming out or the like : so you will require to be on the outlook for her advent, if you do not like to run out some time by railway (if there is a rail), and see her among her rustic neighbours,—within sound of the “ Church Bell ” she has lately *christened*, at her Curé’s request. After all, I participate in your liking for the melody that runs thro’ that strange “ beautiful incontinent ” soul,—a *Modern Magdalen*, with the “ seven devils ” mostly still in her ! At any rate, the introduction is most ready, the instant you write to me for it.

A certain *John* Chapman, Publisher of Liberalisms, “ Extinct Socinianisms,” and notable ware of that kind, in the Strand, has just been here : really a meritorious, productive kind of man, did he well know his road in these times. It appears he has just effected a purchase of the *Westminster Review* (Friend Lombe’s) and has taken Lombe along with him, and other men of cash ; his intense purpose now is, To bring out a Review, Liberal in all senses, that shall charm the world. He has capital “ for four years’ trial,” he says ; an able Editor (name can’t be given), and such an array of “ talent ” as was seldom gathered before. Poor soul, I really wished him well in his enterprise, and regretted I could not help him myself, being clear for silence at present. Since his departure, I have bethought me of you ! There you are in Paris, there you were in Florence, with fiery interest in all manner of things, with whole Libraries to write and say on this and the other thing ! The man means to pay handsomely ; is indeed an *honest* kind of man, with a real enthusiasm (tho’ a soft and slobbery) in him, which can be predicated of very few. Think of it, whether there are not many things you could send him from Paris, and so get rid of them ? If you gave me signal, I would at once set Chapman on applying to you ;—only I fear you

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won't! In which case there is nothing said, nor shall be. Adieu, dear Browning; commend me to the gentle excellent Lady, and remember me now and then.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 114

T. Carlyle to R. Browning, Paris.

CHELSEA,
28th October, 1851.

DEAR BROWNING,

Here is the Mazzini Letter, not achieved till last night, the Triumvir being busy with Kossuth and other chaotic objects. I observe he has given Mrs. Browning the *pas*; which apart from "*place aux dames*" in general, is perhaps very suitable in such an Introduction. May it bring a little pleasure to both of you one day! Mazzini thinks a run out by railway, some day, to the place of Address might be a welcome method. You will see better by inquiry where you are.

I believe I recollect your *Avenue*:¹ spacious smooth road, mounting gently towards the *Arc de l'Etoile*; turns in front of the houses;—an altogether eligible place. If you will tell me whether you look to the South or the North (towards the River or away from it), I shall, on this hypothesis of mine, be well able to conceive your whereabouts, for I was there twice in my late travels. There is nothing mooted here of journeys to Paris or elsewhere; we have a feeling as of Greenland ships *frozen in* during this still season, and are very thankful for it (at least I am) after the jangling uproar of late months. Our weather, dark, dusty, smoky, windless and sunless, seems far inferior to yours: but that is an evil it

¹ Browning's address was "Avenue des Champs Elysées."

were useless to rebel against. The profound isolation I often contrive to secure for myself is a great comparative blessing : the wearied ear, confounded with vain noises (I mean the spiritual ear withal), catches some touch of the "Eternal Silences," with amazement, with terror, joy, and almost horror and rapture blended ; not able to express itself in any way,—except it were by a day's good weeping somewhere ;—and in the meanwhile waves passionately, to the *Mérimées* and Judges of the Industry of all Nations, "*Procul este, O per Deos procul !*"

If I were to go to France, I think my next object would be Normandy rather ; to see the Bayeux Tapestry, the Grave of W. Conqueror, and the footsteps (chiefly Cathedrals I believe) of those huge old Kings of ours. I read a *Ducarel* (French Englishman of 1750) the other week, who roused all my old aspirations for a while. But after all it is better to sit still.—Pray take order with Moxon¹ that I may see that little piece you have been doing. And get into another bigger, *quam primum !* You are not permitted to be silent much longer. Good be with that gentle Lady and you !

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 115

T. Carlyle to R. Browning, Paris.

CHELSEA,
8th March, 1852.

○ DEAR BROWNING,

Above a fortnight ago I received your Letter, and the little *Shelley* Book along with it ;² a most

¹ Browning's publisher.

² Browning's publisher, Moxon, had prevailed on him to write an Introduction to twenty-five letters which he was about to publish in the belief that they were by Shelley Browning consented, and the letters

pleasant pair of objects ; to which, having read the Book too, the very night it arrived, I meant to answer on the morrow. Thanks were heartily ready, and a clear enough opinion which has not altered since : but, by some chance or other, the morrow came to be preoccupied, and then the next morrow and the next,—and the answer up to this moment, you perceive, has never got out of the future tense. Such are the whirlings, cross-currents and regurgitations of this mad Gulf-stream of an element : one's time, unless one fight for every minute of it, all goes devoured and annihilated here ; to get any work at all out of one's life here, I often say, one has to snatch it like furniture from a house on fire ;—and the soul of man is not always equal to feats of that kind ! Alas, alas, the Mud-gods are indeed very strong, in most places at present, and in this place I should say beyond most !

I liked the Essay extremely well indeed ; a solid, well-wrought, massive, manful bit of discourse ; and interesting to me, over and above, as the first bit of *prose* I had ever seen from you ;—I hope only the first of very many. You do not know how cheering to me the authentic sound of a *human* voice is ! I get so little except ape-voices ; the whole Universe filled with one wide tempestuous Cackle, which has neither depth nor sense, nor any kind of truth or nobleness in it : O Heaven, one feels as if it were too bad ; as if the temptation were, to burst into tears, and sit down and weep till one died ! I cannot now, in late years, laugh at such a phenomenon ; oftenest it makes me inexpressibly sad,—as is very natural, if one look at the *whence* and the inevitable *whitherward* ;—wherefore, in general, I rather try to get out of it altogether, quite away from the beggarly

were published before anyone discovered that they were forgeries. The Introduction, however, is generally considered to be Browning's best piece of prose-writing.

sound of it ; and to sit solitary, in company rather with the dumb Chaos than with the talking one. This Essay of yours, and another little word by Emerson are the only new things I have read with real pleasure for a great while past. I agree with what you say of Shelley's moralities and spiritual position ; I honour and respect the weighty estimate you have formed of the Poetic Art ; and I admire very much the grave expressiveness of style (a *little* too elaborate here and there), and the dignified tone, in which you manage to deliver yourself on all that.

The Letters themselves are very innocent and clear ; and deserve printing, with such a name attached to them ; but it is not they that I care for on the present occasion. In fact I am not sure but you would excommunicate me,—at least lay me under the “lesser sentence,” for a time,—if I told you all I thought of Shelley !¹ Poor soul, he has always seemed to me an extremely weak creature, and lamentable much more than admirable. Weak in genius, weak in character (for these two always go together) ; a poor, thin, spasmodic, hectic, shrill and pallid being ;—one of those unfortunates, of whom I often speak, to whom “the talent of *silence*,” first of all, has been denied. The speech of such is never good for much. Poor Shelley, there is something void, and Hades-like in the whole inner world of him ; his universe is all vacant azure, hung with a few frosty mournful if beautiful stars ; the very voice of him (his style, &c.), shrill, shrieky, to my ear has too much of the *ghost* !—In a word, it is not with Shelley, but with Shelley's Commentator, that I take up my quarters at all : and to this latter I will

¹ At a later date Browning told Carlyle that he agreed with him about Shelley and his poetry. It may be added also that Emerson held an equally poor opinion of Shelley, saying that he could see nothing in his poetry but some pretty verses in *The Skylark* and *The Cloud*. (See *W. Allingham's Diary*, p. 242.)

say with emphasis, Give us some more of *your* writing, my friend ; we decidedly need a man or two like you, if we could get them ! Seriously, dear Browning, you must at last gird up your loins again ; and give us a right stroke of work :—I do not wish to hurry you ; far the contrary : but I remind you what is expected ; and say with what joy I, for one, will see it arrive.—Nor do I restrict you to Prose, in spite of all I have said and still say : Prose or Poetry, either of them you can master ; and we will wait for you with welcome in whatever form your own *Daimon* bids. Only see that *he* does bid it ; and then go with your best speed ;—and on the whole forgive, at any rate, these importunities, which I feel to partake much of the nature of impertinence, if you did not kindly interpret them.

About the time your Letter came, or shortly before it, I had given a Card of introduction to a certain M. Montégut of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* ; which document I left him free to present or suppress, and know not which he has done. If he have done the former, pray understand that I do not know him in the flesh at all ; that I only know him as a Writer on English things in that “*Revue*” ; writer, in particular, of an Essay on myself some two or three years ago, which seemed to argue a very ingenuous and rather able and amiable man. If on sight you don’t like him,—act accordingly without respect of me ; who indeed am not cognisant of him beyond what I say, nor concerned in him except as a general son of Adam. That is the real truth ; and so enough of that.

How is poor Mrs. Browning in this fierce weather ? I hardly remember a viler temperature than we have had for ten days back ; grim frozen fog, except a few hours about noon ; whirlpools of frosty dust, and a wind direct from Nova Zembla. However, it will end soon ; and Summer come in spite of all

1855]

CARLYLE'S LETTERS TO

this wriggling and Lancashire up-and-downing on the part of Winter.

We have got through the first two volumes (I read them yesterday) of *Margaret Fuller*. What she says of me, I suppose, is in the third volume : the Pieces in the Newspaper (if that is all, as I suppose) were not perceptibly disagreeable to me. Poor Margaret meant well, and she might have read the phenomena infinitely worse, nay it is surprising she didn't. A gigantic Aspiration : in my life I have seen nothing stranger in that kind ; and very loveable withal : except Emerson's part, the Book is but indifferently done ;—and indeed poor Yankeeland seems but little wiser than poor England. How I should like to see the flap-hat of the old *Chansonnier* !¹ Adieu, dear Browning.

Yours ever,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 116

T. Carlyle to R. Browning, Paris.

CHELSEA,
4th December, 1855.

DEAR BROWNING,

I have not your address ; but Forster [John] engages to send you this Note, along with one of his own ; and if I get answer within the next six weeks (which is a wide limit), *business* will not suffer by the delay, whatever other things may suffer. You permitted me to send you Queries, should such arise, fit for solution in Paris ; and this seems to be of the number. Most small and insignificant-looking : only to be answered if you *can* manage it without too much trouble.

In the Books about the once famed and now

¹ Béranger, whose appearance Browning had described in his letter to Carlyle.

forgotten war of the French, in Bohemia, &c., in 1740-'43, under Belleisle and Broglio, there occurs mention now and then of an Officer called *Marquis du Châtelet*;—for example, in the following Books, in reference to a bad adventure of his (bombarded at *Dingelfingen* in Bavaria, by *Daun*, not yet famous *Daun*), of date 17 May, 1743 :

Histoire de la dernière Guerre de Bohème (à Franckfort, chez Paul Lenclume, 1745, 3 voll. small 12mo,—Brunet says it is by Mauvillon ; which I doubt : but it is easily found) vol. ii., p. 226 ;—item :

Journal Historique ou Fastes du règne de Louis XV. (Paris, 1766, 2 voll. 12mo), vol. ii., p. 402 (this Book dates it wrong, "May 9,"—or indeed does not seem to know the date well) ;—item, what is by far the best authority :

Baron d'Espagnac : *Vie du Maréchal de Saxe* (or some equivalent title, a well-known Book—of which I possess only the German Translations and therefore can only give you my own *German* page-cipher) vol. i., p. 186,—or *Livre 6* (where it will be easy to find) under date 17 May, 1743 ; with a reliable description of the affair.

Now I want very much to know (in a small way), Was this the Husband of Voltaire's Madame ?¹ I am nearly sure he was ; but want to be perfectly sure. If you have an acquaintance, in the least a good reader of History, he will be able to ascertain,—by many methods, open to him, and shut *here*. I add, by way of further *earmark*, That this Du Châtelet, a General Officer seemingly, marched in Belleisle's Army (towards Austria, August 1741), and not in Maillebois's do. (which went to Westphalia to smite George II.) ; furthermore that he, the said Du Châtelet, had stood siege with Ségur in Linz (January 1742), and must have gone idle (in France probably)

¹ The "divine Emilie."

for a year after that adventure, such being the Capitulation Ségur and he made. These marks will abundantly identify him ; and I think he will turn out to be as above said.—Now that my hand is in, let me add two other little Queries :

1. In the *Fastes* just cited (vol. ii.—or indeed by *pages* they are all one volume—*Fastes*, &c., p. 395 *bis*) an Official Marquis de Breteuil dies, 1 January, 1743 :—How is this gentleman related to Madame du Châtelet ? She, I remember, was a Breteuil ;—Niece to this man, or how ?

2. In *d'Espagnac* just cited (*Livre* 8, very near the beginning of it, ii. 26 of my German), a *Marquis du Talleyrand* and some others are blown up in the Trenches of Tournay, May 8–9 (night-time) 1745,—just before the Battle of Fontenoy. How related to the Talleyrand of our day ;—his Uncle or how ?—(If the French had on their old Book-stalls any Book like our old Collins's *Peerage*, to be had for half a sovereign, and out of which you can fish all manner of things in the above kind—But, alas, they are almost sure not to have it !).

Well, at anyrate, this is all, dear Browning ; and I will leave it with you,—calculating on forgiveness, if I give you labour in vain. I send many kind regards to the Lady and you ; it is verily one of my sorrows and lasting regrets that you cannot be seen from night to night by me, but live on the other side of seas.—I got a glimpse of your *Men and Women* ; and will not rest till I have read it ; there ! That old “corregidor” is a diamond—*unequalled* since something else of yours I saw.

Courage ever, and stand to your arms !

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 117

T. Carlyle to R. Browning, Paris.

CHELSEA,

25th April, 1856

DEAR BROWNING,

It is a long time since I got your Book¹ according to program ; a long time since I read it all, many of the Pieces again and again : nor was it a difficulty of *conscience* that has kept me silent ; my approval was hearty and spontaneous, able I was and am to give you "*Euge !*" far beyond what I reckon you desire ; and indeed I believe myself to stand among the first ranks of your readers in that particular. But you asked with so much loyalty, "What shall I do to be saved, and gain the top of this sore upward course?" and seemed to have such a faith in the older Stager and fellow-climber to give you a word of advice,—I really knew not what to say, and hesitated always. Not to say that I am dreadfully busy, and never have a moment that is not sunk in dust and difficulty and semi-despair these many months and years !—At length I have renounced altogether the high thought of "advising," and the like ; for indeed I see the case is very complex, and I have learned by experience that advice, real *advice* from without, is generally an impossibility. "Nobody follows advice," they say ; which means withal, "Advice never hits the case ; the case is not known to any Adviser, but only to the Advisee,—who has good right to protest, for most part !" Accept a few rough human words, then, such as the day gives ; and do not consider them as pretending to be more than honest words, rough and ready, from a fellow-pilgrim well-affected to you.

It is certain there is an excellent opulence of intellect

¹ *Men and Women*, published in 1855.

in these two rhymed volumes : intellect in the big ingot shape and down to the smallest current coin ;— I shall look far, I believe, to find such a pair of *eyes* as I see busy there inspecting human life this long while. The keenest just insight into men and things ; —and all that goes along with really good *insight* : a fresh valiant manful character, equipped with rugged humour, with just love, just contempt, well carried and bestowed ;—in fine a most extraordinary power of expression ; such I must call it, whether it be “ expressive ” *enough*, or not. Rhythm there is too, endless poetic fancy, symbolical *help* to express ; and if not melody always or often (for that would mean finish and perfection), there is what the Germans call *Takt*,—fine *dancing*, if to the music only of *drums*.

Such a faculty of talent, “ genius ” if you like the name better, seems to me *worth* cultivating, worth sacrificing oneself to tame and subdue into perfection ; —none more so, that I know, of men now alive. Nay, in a private way, I admit to myself that here apparently is *the finest* poetic genius, finest possibility of such, we have got vouchsafed us in this generation, and that it will be a terrible pity if we spill it in the process of elaboration. Said genius, too, I perceive, has really *grown*, in all ways, since I saw it last ; I hope it will continue growing, tho’ the difficulties are neither few nor small !

Well ! but what is the shadow side of the Picture, then ? For in that too I ought to be equally honest. My friend, it is what they call “ unintelligibility ! ” That is a fact : you are dreadfully difficult to understand ; and that is really a sin. Admit the accusation : I testify to it ; I found most of your pieces too hard of interpretation, and more than one (chiefly of the short kind) I had to read as a very enigma. I did make them all out,—all with about two insignificant exceptions ;—but I do not know if many

readers have got so far. Consider that case ; it is actually flagrant !¹

Now I do not mean to say the cure is easy, or the sin a mere perversity. God knows I too understand very well what it is to be "unintelligible" so-called. It is the effort of a man with very much to say, endeavouring to get it said in a not sordid or unworthy way, to men who are at home chiefly in the sordid, the prosaic, inane and unworthy. I see you pitching big crags into the dirty bottomless morass, trying to *found* your marble work,—Oh, it is a tragic condition withal !—But yet you *must* mend it, and alter. A writing man is there to be understood : let him lay that entirely to heart, and conform to it patiently ; the sooner the better !

I do not at this point any longer forbid you *verse*, as probably I once did. I perceive it has grown to be your dialect, it comes more naturally than prose ;—and in prose too a man can be "unintelligible" if he like ! My private notion of what *is* Poetry—Oh, I do hope to make *you*, one day, understand that ; which hitherto no one will do :² but it must not

¹ Referring to the charge of unintelligibility or obscurity, Browning wrote, 27th November, 1868, to a friend, as follows : "I can have little doubt but that my writing has been, in the main, too hard for many I should have been pleased to communicate with : but I never designedly tried to puzzle people, as some of my critics have supposed. On the other hand, I never pretended to offer such literature as should be a substitute for a cigar or a game of dominoes to an idle man. So perhaps on the whole I get my deserts and something over—not a crowd but a few I value more."—From a letter now in the British Museum.

² In his *Lectures on Heroes*, Carlyle has described clearly enough what he understood poetry to be : "Poetry, therefore, we will call *musical Thought*. The Poet is he who *thinks* in that manner. At bottom, it turns still on power of intellect ; it is a man's sincerity and depth of vision that makes him a Poet. See deep enough, and you see musically ; the heart of Nature *being* everywhere music, if you can only reach it."

It is a great mistake to say, as many do, that Carlyle hated poetry. The fact is, as readers of his works know, that it was only bad poetry that he disliked. If on this point he erred at all, it was in being perhaps too strict a judge of poetry, and too hard to please with what had only the form of poetry and not the essence. He says in his Third Lecture on Heroes : "It is only when the heart of him [the Poet] is rapt into true passion of

concern us at present. Continue to write in verse, if you find it handier. And what more? Aye, what, what! Well, the sum of my ideas is: If you took up some one *great* subject, and tasked all your powers upon it for a long while, vowing to Heaven that you *would* be plain to mean capacities, then—!—But I have done, *done*. Good be with you always, dear Browning; and high victory to sore fight!

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

melody, and the very tones of him become musical by the greatness, depth and music of his thoughts, that we can give him right to rhyme and sing; that we call him a Poet, and listen to him as the Heroic of Speakers,—whose speech *is* Song. Pretenders to this are many; and to an earnest reader, I doubt, it is for most part a very melancholy, not to say an insupportable business, that of reading rhyme! Rhyme that had no inward necessity to be rhymed;—it ought to have told us plainly, without any jingle, what it was aiming at. . . . Precisely as we love the true song, and are charmed by it as by something divine, so we hate the false song, and account it a mere wooden noise, a thing hollow, superfluous, altogether an insincere and offensive thing.”

FINIS.

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